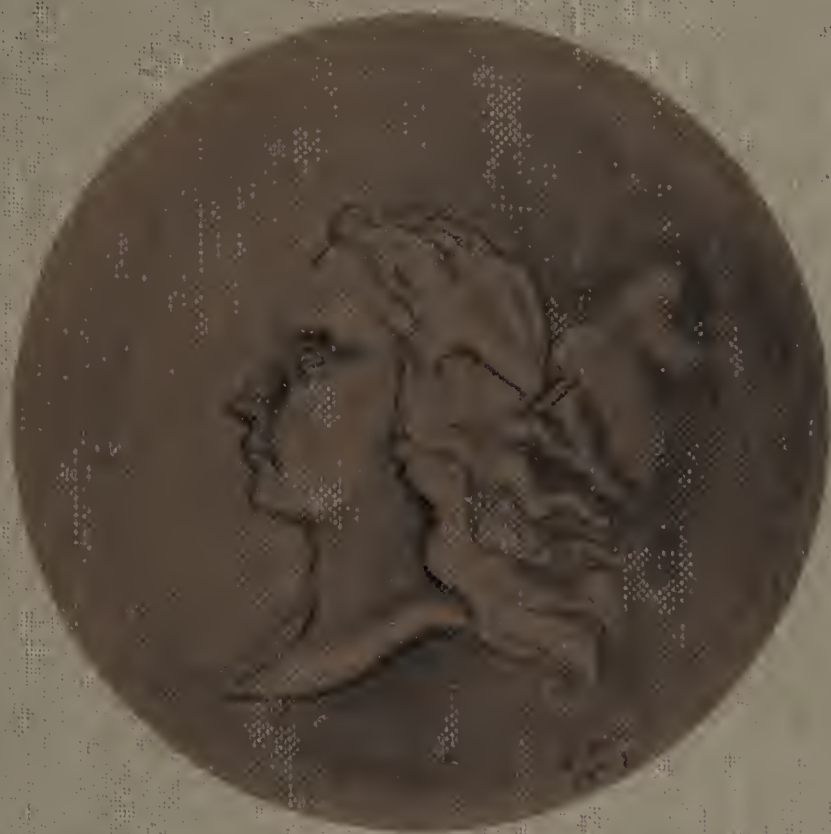


AMERICAN HALF CENTS



the
“LITTLE HALF SISTERS”

By Roger S. Cohen, Jr.



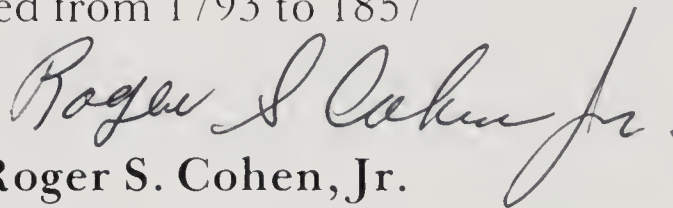
AMERICAN HALF CENTS

the

“LITTLE HALF SISTERS”

A Reference Book on the United States Half Cent

Coined from 1793 to 1857



By Roger S. Cohen, Jr.

Member: Early American Coppers Club #188

American Numismatic Association #14814

With the Assistance of
Ray Munde and Paul Munson

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Printed in the United States of America.

PREFACE

The "Little Half Sisters" of the U. S. Large Cent have been an interest of mine since childhood when I acquired one from a school pal. It was an 1835. Much to my great surprise and chagrin, a coin dealer told me it was only worth 35¢, and shortly thereafter I lost it when visiting the Washington Zoo. The memory is still with me; its condition would be considered Fine by today's standards.

Ten years later, when I reached young adulthood and was collecting Indianhead and Lincoln cents, a family friend gave me a handful of the "Little Half Sisters," which had belonged to his ancestors, with the comment, "Twenty cents took a lot of coins in those days". This started me on a date collection which was completed in about a year. I then borrowed from the ANA Library a copy of Gilbert's 1916 work and set out to classify my coins. No great rarities showed up but my interest was whetted and I accumulated a partial collection by variety. In 1953 I sold the majority of my United States collection to purchase my first home, but kept certain Half Cents as I just could not bear to be without them, and, through the following years, I have been able to assemble a fair collection which has been the basis for this book. I doubt that I will live long enough to acquire an example of each die vari-

ety but the possibility exists.

Ebenezer Gilbert's 1916 book is very comprehensive and, with the exception of 2 new reverse dies and 3 mulings of dies known to him, there is little to add directly to his work, when it comes to the coinage struck for circulation. His rarity ratings have generally withstood the test of time. However, his order of listing varieties, as to a presumed emission sequence, is not in order; also, more information has been turned up as to the how and why of certain varieties. As usual, in the quest for more knowledge as to the how and why, even more questions arise, some of which I will attempt to answer.

The purpose of writing this book is that for the last twenty years I have wanted to read it. On at least two prior occasions, I had hoped that someone else would write it. However, I feel that waiting will not get the book done, hence, I have written. I earnestly hope to hear from other collectors so that if there are any facts that I have not mentioned, they can be included in a revised book.

Roger S. Cohen, Jr.

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October 1971

INTRODUCTION

In January 1948, shortly after I joined the Washington Numismatic Society, I was approached by the Secretary to talk on Half Cents. My talk was rather short and was prepared on the basis of my observations. I started with the statement, "The Half Cent was a miniature of the Large Cent during the period of its coinage". I then went on to describe the major types and how they related to the Large Cent. My original statement still stands but it now appears that they were "Little Half Sisters", unwanted and considered to be of little importance.

In preparing this work I am not going to give an account of the Mint in its early days but shall make reference to it from time to time. There have been a number of books on this subject. Most recently has been Don Taxay's 1966 work, "The U. S. Mint and Coinage"; also, Frank H. Stewart's 1924 work, "History of the First United States Mint", is an excellent work on this subject.

There are three items which have to do with collectors which I will make reference to, and they are: Rarity, Condition, and Value. These were covered very extensively by Dr. William H. Sheldon in his 1949 work, "Early American Cents", and I agree with him generally.

Rarity

The rarity scale which I shall use is based on the one originally set forth by Dr. Sheldon, which has been generally adopted in American numismatics.

- R-1 Common
- R-2 Not so Common
- R-3 Scarce
- R-4 Very Scarce (Specimens *ESTIMATED* at 76-200)
- R-5 Rare (Specimens *ESTIMATED* at 31-75)
- R-6 Very Rare (Specimens *ESTIMATED* at 13-30)
- R-7 Extremely Rare (Specimens *ESTIMATED* at 4-12)
- R-8 Uncollectible (Less than 4 Specimens known to the author)

In reading this work it should be remembered that the evaluation as to rarity is mine, based on my observations, and these are *Estimates*, except as to classification R-8. I am reasonably sure that once this book gets into the hands of

collectors, I will hear from enough persons to warrant elimination of the R-8 rating, except for new varieties, and once they are publicized they too will no longer be rated R-8.

Condition

The condition classification of a coin is perhaps one of the most controversial subjects in American numismatics. The controversy stems from the fact that two or more persons are expressing judgments. The purpose is to fit the coin into certain classifications of condition which have evolved over many years. The various classifications express the degree that coins have been altered from the moment of mintage. Prior to the publication of "Early American Cents", the use of adjectives to express condition was the only widely used method. In that work, Dr. Sheldon combined a numerical scale with the adjectival scale. This book expanded the classifications. It did not eliminate the controversy as a person making judgment now has a possible 70 points of reference in place of approximately 10 points; however, in practice the Sheldon scale is used with 22 or 23 points of reference.

The author is of the opinion that condition amounts to little more than what the collector, dealer or cataloguer wants it to be. Each person must learn to make his own evaluation and, depending on the circumstances, let his evaluation be known. As pointed out earlier, very few persons are in agreement; therefore, I will not attempt to list a condition census for each variety of the Half Cents such as Dr. Sheldon did for the Large Cents. I will, however, make reference to the availability of certain varieties in various conditions when I consider it necessary.

It is my hope that in any revised edition of this work a condition census for each variety can be listed. To some persons it may appear that I am "dodging the issue" when it comes to condition and, quite frankly, I am, as the controversy is one that has been going on as long as I can remember. Rather than being settled, it appears to be intensifying.

Value

In his excellent exercise, "Early American Cents", Dr. Sheldon established basal values for the coins which, when multiplied by the numerical grade of condition, gave the *approximate* value of coins.

I will not attempt to set basal values for Half Cents due to the uncertainty of the coin market. When I first started to actively purchase coins in 1946, the dealer (A. Hepner) from whom I purchased most coins told me, "Hold off on the rarities; they are too high and will come down". He was correct in that they came down some, but they never reached the 1940 prices which I was sure he had in mind. In 1948, against his advice, I purchased from another dealer a 1796 Half Cent in Good condition for \$85.00 which, today (1971), would cost approximately \$1,000.00. When I told him of my purchase, he just shrugged his shoulders and said, "You'll never get your money back on that one". In 1953 it seemed to me the coin market had risen to an unprecedented level. This was one factor which led me to sell the majority of my U. S. coin collection. I made a small profit on my collection. By 1963 it was quite evident that, instead of selling at a high point, I had sold too soon as the increased number of collectors, combined

with inflation, had pushed coins to what seemed unbelievable prices. Since that time I have seen a steady increase in prices, with only an occasional slow down.

Half Cents seem to have responded to this steady price increase as have most uncurrent Copper, Silver and Nickel U. S. coins. Type coins such as 1793 and 1794, and extreme rarities such as 1796, have increased at a faster rate.

The task of assigning values to Half Cents is a complex one, but the prices of many of them are published in annual coin catalogues. This makes it possible to determine the approximate current value at any time. The catalogues usually list Half Cents by date and easily distinguished varieties but do not price each variety which I have included in this work; therefore, I have developed a system of values for each variety. The system uses the current catalogue price by condition times a factor to arrive at the *approximate* value.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Catalogue Variety Description</u>	<u>My Variety #</u>	<u>Factor</u>
1793	—	2, 3, & 4	1
1793	—	1	1½
1794	—	1a, 2a, & 9	1
1794	—	4	2
1794	—	5	4
1794	—	3, 6, 7, & 8	8
1794	—	1b, & 2b	15
1795	Lettered Edge, Date not Punctuated	1	1
1795	Lettered Edge, Punctuated Date	2a	1
1795	Plain Edge, Punctuated Date	4	1
1795	Plain Edge, Punctuated Date	3	4
1795	Plain Edge, Punctuated Date	2b	8
1795	No Pole to Cap	6a	1
1795	No Pole to Cap	5a	1½
1795	No Pole to Cap	5b	4
1795	No Pole to Cap	6b	15
1796	Pole to Cap	2	1
1796	No Pole to Cap	1	1
1797	Lettered Edge	3b	1
1797	Plain Edge	2, & 3a	1

<u>Date</u>	<u>Catalogue Variety Description</u>	<u>My Variety #</u>	<u>Factor</u>
1797	1 over 1	1	1
1797	(Not in Catalogue)	3c	4 times Lettered Edge price
1800	—	1	1
1802	Reverse of 1800	1	1
1802	New Reverse	2	1
1803	—	1, & 3	1
1803	—	4	2
1803	—	2	4
1804	Plain 4 with Stems	11	1
1804	Plain 4 No Stems	13	1
1804	Crosslet 4 No Stems	12	1
1804	Crosslet 4 With Stems	9, & 10	1
1804	Crosslet 4 With Stems	1	2
1804	Crosslet 4 With Stems	4	8
1804	Crosslet 4 With Stems	2, & 3	Speculative
1804	Spiked Chin	6, & 8	1
1804	Spiked Chin	5	4
1804	Spiked Chin	7	8
1805	Small 5, No Stems	1	1
1805	Small 5, With Stems	3	1
1805	Small 5, With Stems	2	4
1805	Large 5	4	1
1806	Small 6, No Stems	1	1
1806	Small 6, With Stems	2	1
1806	Small 6, With Stems	3	8
1806	Large 6	4	1
1807	—	1	1
1808	Over 7	2	1
1808	Over 7	1	Speculative
1808	Normal Date	3	1
1809	Circle Inside Zero	4	1
1809	Over 6	5	1
1809	Normal Date	3, & 6	1
1809	Normal Date	2	2
1809	Normal Date	1	15
1810	—	1	1
1811	—	2	1
1811	—	1	1½
1825	—	2	1
1825	—	1	2

<u><i>Date</i></u>	<u><i>Catalogue Variety Description</i></u>	<u><i>My Variety #</i></u>	<u><i>Factor</i></u>
1826	—	1	1
1826	—	2	2
1828	12 Stars	2	1
1828	13 Stars	3	1
1828	13 Stars	1	1½
1829	—	1	1
1831	—	1	1
1832	—	2, & 3	1
1832	—	1	1½

All Half Cents after 1832 are valued at current catalogue prices.

This value system will not work precisely in all cases and is intended to be used as a guide. It should not be construed as an inflexible, rigid rule or formula; however, I believe it to be responsive to changing coin values.

NOTES AS TO ARRANGEMENT OF CHAPTERS

The arrangement of the chapters is one for each date which I feel was struck for circulation, with a final chapter about "Other Half Cents". These are those pieces of metal which have the words HALF CENT on them, which I feel were made for collectors. This last chapter will include proofs struck from regular dies. To me a proof is just an ornamental coin, minted to be saved but not spent. Collectors who specialize in proofs may have an interest in them, but I prefer the regular coinage which was turned out for the then general public of which I am a later day member.

The reason for the chapters being by date is that it is the historical and usual method of classifying United States coins. This classification system has been used since the beginning of collecting in this country in the 1840's and 1850's, and has become ingrained in the collecting fraternity.

Each date chapter is arranged in the following order:

1. Design Description
2. Die Preparation
3. Planchets
4. Varieties in Order of Presumed Emission Sequence
 - a. Photograph of Obverse and Reverse
 - b. Equivalents in Prior Literature
 - c. Main Feature of Obverse Die
 - d. Main Feature of Reverse Die
 - e. Known Die Breaks
 - f. Rarity and Comments on Variety
5. Keys to Varieties of Date
6. Emission Sequence
7. General Comments as to Date

The final chapter is devoted to categories of "Other Half Cents".

Design Description

This is a general description of the design when it changes or is altered. I am presuming that the reader of this book is somewhat familiar with U. S. coinage, therefore, my descriptions will be brief.

Die Preparation

Coins then as now are stamped cold from obverse and reverse dies of a harder metal.

During the period of Half Cent coinage, it was an early form of steel. Dies were cut completely by hand in 1793. In 1794 apparently two hubs or puncheons were prepared and used for some obverse and reverse dies. These hubs had part of the design raised in a similar manner to the coin produced from the finished die. This hub was stamped into the die and produced the majority of the die. The engraver then used smaller punches and a graver to complete the die, which was then hardened by a process known as case-hardening. Apparently the method used by the Mint was ineffective as most Half Cents, as well as other coins of the period, show irregular lines and extra masses of metal where the dies have broken or cracked. Dies also appear to have warped surfaces due to the hardening process which produced bulges or depressions on the coins. In The National Archives there is a letter from the Director of the Mint, Elias Boudinot, to Matthew Boulton in England, dated July 10, 1798, requesting instructions for the hardening of dies, as the loss of dies was greater than he thought necessary.

Hubs were used throughout the Half Cent coinage, except for 1793, and as time went on, the dies improved both as to the hardness and the durability, and the use of hubs was expanded to an entire reverse die.

Planchets

In the first years of the Mint, the production of planchets for copper coinage was a laborious, time-consuming task. All copper used seems to have come from England in the form of sheets or in the form of domestic scrap metal. In early 1796 a Mr. Coltman, representing the Governor and Company Copper Miners in England, started shipping sheet copper to the Mint for the purpose of making planchets. As a result of some correspondence in April 1796, Coltman, on July 11, 1796, shipped via the vessel *REBECCA*, 20 cases of sheet copper and 41 small cases of copper planchets. It is not known whether any Half Cent planchets were included but, judging from the rarity of 1796 dated Half Cents, I doubt there were any. In 1797 the Mint started purchasing satisfactory copper planchets from Matthew Boulton, of the firm Boulton and

Watt, in Soho, near Birmingham, England. This arrangement continued until the late 1830's, when all contracts for planchets were made with Crocker & Bros. of Taunton, Massachusetts. This firm continued to furnish copper planchets for the Cent and Half Cent until the coins were discontinued in 1857.

Half Cents appear to have had lower standards for planchets than Cents in the years 1794 to 1803. The Mint used, in addition to regularly prepared planchets, misstruck Cents, private tokens, and State coinage. These items were first put through a roller to reduce them to the approximate thickness, and then cut to size. Many Half Cents of this period will exhibit features of the planchet's prior stamping, which are referred to as an undertype. After 1802 all planchets used were prepared outside the Mint, so that all the Mint had to do was to stamp the planchets and ship coins when necessary.

Varieties

Each obverse and reverse die combination known to me has been assigned a number in the order of the presumed emission sequence of each date. Thus, the first obverse and reverse die combination of a date such as 1793 will be identified as 1793 Variety #1. The second obverse and reverse die combination of that date will be 1793 Variety #2. This system assigns a separate number to each known die combination of a date.

For the dates 1794, 1795 and 1797, there are die combinations struck on planchets which have differences in edge markings and/or weight. In these situations I have assigned a small letter to follow the die combination number. For example, the second die combination of 1795 is first struck on a thick planchet weighing approximately 104 grains and has its edge incused with the words TWO HUNDRED FOR A DOLLAR. This coin is identified as 1795 Variety #2a. The same die combination was used on a thin planchet weighing approximately 84 grains with a plain edge. This coin is identified as 1795 Variety #2b.

In setting the standards as to whether a die combination will have a further refinement as set forth in the preceding paragraph, I have eliminated errors in edge lettering, die breaks, and, with one exception, variations in the weight of the planchets. The exception on planchet weight occurs on die combinations 5 and 6 of

1795. In this case the Mint used thin, plain edge planchets weighing approximately 84 grains, and thick, wider, plain edge planchets weighing approximately 115 grains. The reason for this difference is unknown, but the coins are easily distinguishable.

Photographs

The photographs of each variety are enlarged. This will enable the reader to easily view each variety. The coins used for the photographs are all from the author's collection, with the exception of those noted. For certain varieties, I have used the obverse and reverse of other specimens as I do not have the particular variety. These are indicated at the photograph with the word (Composite).

Some persons may be critical of the condition of the coins photographed. In answer to this, I will point out that most specimens encountered, prior to 1825, are usually worn. This book is not an essay on condition, and the photographs are being used for identification purposes.

Equivalents in Prior Literature

There have been two prior works devoted strictly to Half Cents. They are:

1. THE UNITED STATES HALF CENTS, by Ebenezer Gilbert, New York, 1916.
2. THE EMPIRE GUIDE TO UNITED STATES HALF CENTS, 1793-1857, by Q. David Bowers and James F. Ruddy, Johnson City, N. Y., 1962.

In this work I shall abbreviate them as follows:

G - Gilbert
E - Empire

Gilbert's book is excellent and it is only due to the fact that more information has been made available since its publication that I have even "taken pen in hand". This book has been extensively reprinted, and if a collector wants a more thorough written description of each of the then known dies, this book is recommended. Mr. Gilbert, who died before my birth, was a real student of the early U. S. Copper Coinage, and he was a pioneer in the field of Half Cents.

The Empire book has a great deal of information, but it suffers from typographical errors and a lack of illustrations. This book, however, has descriptions of all new varieties discovered subsequent to the publication of

Gilbert's work, except a muling of previously known dies (Variety #2 of 1804).

Keys to Varieties of Date

At the conclusion of the listing of each variety for a date, I have prepared a guide as to how to quickly identify each variety. I have devised this from my observations. With the exceptions of 1794, 1804 and 1809, the rapid identification of varieties is very simple. I am of the opinion that there are dies and mulings of previously known dies that are not known to me. These guides should help those who desire to collect the "Little Half Sisters".

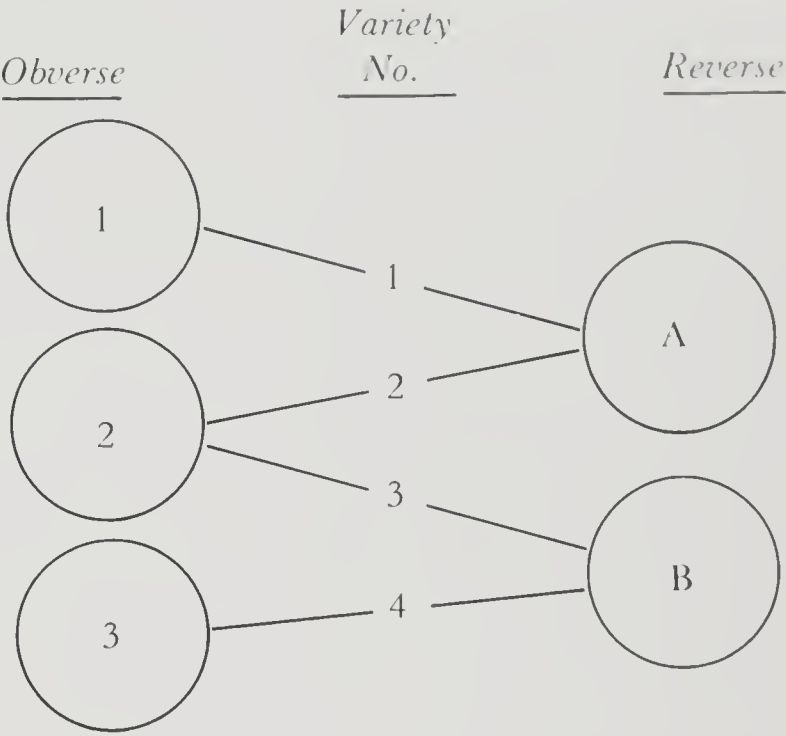
Emission Sequence

In the very early days of collecting U. S. coins, collectors started by accumulating one coin of each date. After this was complete, or nearly complete, certain collectors noted that there were slight differences in coins bearing the same date, so out came the magnifying glasses. Before long it was determined that for a coin such as the Half Cent of 1804, there were five different types, depending on whether the 4 in the date was plain or had a crosslet on it, and whether the reverse had stems to the wreath or not; and if the coin had a crosslet 4 and stems to the wreath, did the figure of Liberty have a spike on her chin? Other collectors went beyond this and noticed that certain reverses with stems were different. Eventually, as a result of curiosity, it was realized that each coinage die could be identified due to certain peculiarities of its preparation. It was further realized that certain dies were used before others due to apparent deterioration of the die. After Ebenezer Gilbert published his book in 1916, dealer S. H. Chapman of Philadelphia, in cataloguing the famous Alvord collection of Half Cents in 1924, made note that "The arrangement of dies of 1794 by the late Mr. E. Gilbert is most palpably out of order". However Gilbert noted in his book all the die states of which he was aware. This has enabled later day numismatists to form their own ideas as to what *might* have been the order of emission.

The trouble with trying to establish this is the fact that people just did not make exact records of what they were doing 178 to 114 years ago; *so at best an emission sequence is an educated guess*. Consider some problems as they relate to Half Cents. For the year 1799 a record in The National Archives indicates that 12,167 coins

were delivered. I have never heard of a 1799 dated specimen. For the calendar year 1795, 25,600 are recorded as being delivered, and for 1796 the figure is 115,480; yet the dated 1796 coin is the rarest date of all the Half Cents, and 1795 is very common in comparison. I could cite more examples.

Another problem arises when, after careful study, you determine that three obverse dies and two reverse dies were used. You prepare a diagram based on the deterioration of the dies, as follows:



When you discover that obverse 1 was used with reverse B, what is the answer?

The primary error you have made is that you have assumed only one coining press was used. It could have been two. It is known that the Mint had three coining presses in 1793, and by 1802 there were five coining presses. Half Cents seem to have been particularly subject to interruption and whims of the coiner. This was probably due to the fact that the demand for the coin was limited. The striking of Half Cents probably occurred when there was a sufficient supply of planchets and time could be spared from minting more important coins.

In this work I have attempted to set forth an emission sequence for each date; however, this is not the final word. It appears to me that some coins were struck as many as three years later than the date which the coin bears. Perhaps I have allowed myself too much license in doing this but, from what I have read of the Half Cent, it was not only the coin of least value; it was considered by the Mint to be the least important and therefore probably subject to license when it was coined.

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1793

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Obverse. Bust of Liberty with Liberty Cap supported by a pole which rests on Liberty's right shoulder. Liberty is facing left. The word LIBERTY is above the bust and the date below. The basic arrangement of the bust of Liberty with the word LIBERTY above and the date below continues until 1809. The border consists of dots arranged in a circular pattern. The designer is unknown but Don Taxay, in "The U. S. Mint and Coinage", presents strong evidence that Adam Eckfeldt was the designer. Mr. Eckfeldt was employed by the Mint from its beginning until the 1850's. The Libertas Americana medal which was struck about this time has been given as the source of the bust of Liberty. With the exception of the fact that Liberty is facing left, it could be stated that this design was copied for the third (Liberty Cap) design of the Large Cent of 1793.

Reverse. The legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA surrounds a wreath of two leaved branches interlaced with lines of berries. The wreath is tied with a ribbon which has a single bow. The words HALF CENT are within the wreath. The fraction 1/200 is below the knot and within the ribbon ends. The border is a series of dots similar to the obverse. This design is a reduced version of the second (wreath) design of the One Cent Piece of 1793, which has been attributed to Adam Eckfeldt or Joseph Wright, the first Engraver of the Mint, who died during

the summer of 1793. This basic reverse design, like the obverse, continues until 1809.

DIE PREPARATION The two obverse and three reverse dies used appear to have been prepared by hand, using punches and gravers.

PLANCHETS These were evidently rolled from sheet copper.

I do not know of any 1793's which appear to have planchets made from defective Cents, which is prevalent in the years 1795-1802. The planchets which weigh about 104 grains are smaller and thicker than in 1794 and 1795 when the weight was the same.

The edge is lettered TWO HUNDRED FOR A DOLLAR followed by two leaves. The lettering was incused into the planchets by the use of a machine which was known at that time as a Milling Machine. This machine had two separate dies with raised letters. One die had the words TWO HUNDRED; the other die had the words FOR A DOLLAR, and the leaves. This machine was used for Half Cent edge lettering on all 1793 and 1794 specimens. It was also used on some 1795 and 1797 specimens. It is not known if this machine was used to produce the gripped edge specimens of 1797 (Variety #3c).

Occasionally a specimen will be seen with an overlap of lettering. As these errors are caused by improper operation of the Milling Machine, they will not be enumerated.



Equivalents G-4, E-4

Obverse 1 The 1 of LIBERTY is directly above the juncture of Liberty's forehead and hair. There are other differences to distinguish this die from obverse 2 but they are so slight that one must have both obverses together for comparison. As this is true of most dies, I shall only describe a main or diagnostic feature of each die. The feature which I describe will usually be visible even on a very worn specimen.

Reverse A Sixteen leaves on the right branch of the wreath. There is a dot after AMERICA and after CENT. The left stem touches U in

UNITED. This die becomes warped in the center so that HALF CENT is seldom visible on specimens in less than Fine condition.

Die Breaks Reverse. The die rim chips at F of OF and runs to E in AMERICA. This causes a ridge of metal to be elevated above the plane of the coin.

Rarity 4 The scarcest 1793. Very seldom seen in higher than Fine; however, about seven are known in Extremely Fine or higher condition.

VARIETY #2



Equivalents G-3, E-3

Obverse 1 The same as on Variety #1.

Reverse B Fifteen leaves on the right branch of the wreath. HALF CENT close together with a large center dot between these words.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 This is another coin which is usually seen in the lower grades of condition.



Equivalents G-1, E-1

Obverse 2 The L of LIBERTY is directly above the juncture of Liberty's forehead and hair.

Reverse B The same as on Variety #2.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 While this variety is of about equal scarcity to Variety #2, it is more available in higher grades.

VARIETY #4



Equivalents G-2, E-2

Obverse 2 The same as on Variety #3. On specimens in Extremely Fine or higher condition, occasionally there can be seen a myriad of tiny points in the fields of the coin. The cause of this is presumed to be rust on the die. As this seems to occur on other Half Cent dies a brief explanation follows.

The weather in Philadelphia then as now was usually very humid, particularly in the summer. Any die which was not used and did not have a thorough coat of oil or grease applied would probably rust in less than a week. If a die rusted and it was not deep, it could be used again, but the striking process would produce the reverse impression of the rust pits in the die on the coin. If the rust was deep, the die would have to be reworked and case-hardened again as the reworking would remove some of the original case-hardening. The marks on a coin caused by die rust will disappear after a very limited amount

of circulation of a coin. It should also be kept in mind that the copper used in the early years sometimes appears to be granular when viewed with a magnifier. This applies regardless of the condition of the coin, so that a coin in Extremely Fine or higher condition can exhibit both rust pits and granulation which can be told apart only after considerable experience at viewing coins.

Reverse C Thirteen leaves on the **left** branch of the wreath. This is the only 1793 reverse with this number of leaves on the left branch. Another feature is the very long stems of the wreath which do not touch or even come close to any letter of the legend.

Die Breaks None known.

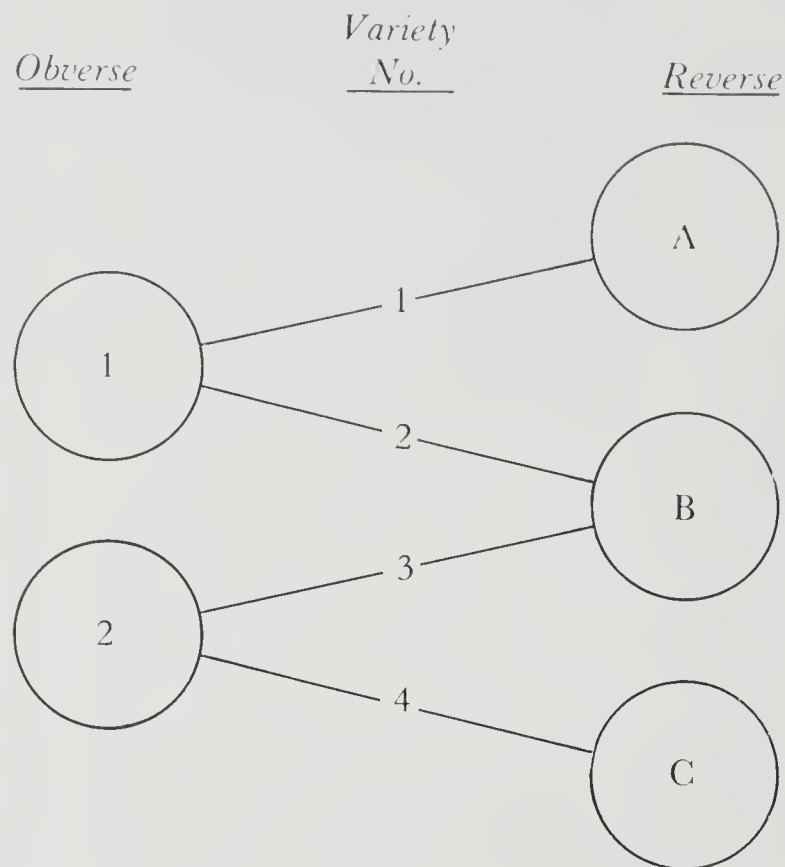
Rarity 3 Many specimens of this variety are known in the higher grades which is probably due to coins being saved in 1793 and 1794 as the least expensive example of the first year of coinage or a design change in the next year.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

- A. I is over juncture of Liberty's forehead and hair. Examine Reverse.
 a. 16 leaves on right branch of wreath is #1.
 b. 15 leaves on right branch of wreath is #2.
- B. L is over juncture of Liberty's forehead and hair. Examine reverse.
 a. 15 leaves on right branch of wreath is #3.
 b. 13 leaves on **left** branch of wreath is #4.

1793 EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

The coinage for this year has been given in two amounts: 31,934 and 35,334. The difference of 3,400 is apparently due to an error made in 1799 when the Mint compiled a statement of deliveries. This statement was then copied in later years and then copies made from the copies, etc. The correct coinage is 35,334. This information was first published by Frank H. Stewart in 1924 in "History of the First United States Mint". It was confirmed by Walter Breen's research in The National Archives which began in 1952, after the Archives completed its preliminary inventory of Record Group #104. Recently I found in the Archives a further report dated

November 24, 1796 which confirms the coinage of 35,334.

Deliveries of this coinage were all in the quarter ending September 30, and were in the following amounts:

7,000
24,934
<u>3,400</u>
<u>35,334</u>

Specimens of this date are high priced. This is attributed to demand caused by the fact that the design was only used in this year.

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Obverse. Liberty has now turned her head and is facing right. She has also shifted the pole which supports her Liberty Cap to her left shoulder. This design has been attributed to Robert Scot, who was appointed Engraver of the Mint on November 23, 1793. The Cent of the year is a larger edition of this design. The border of the Half Cent has also been changed to denticles.

Reverse. The same basic design as the prior year except that the lines of berries from the wreath have been replaced by single berries on the wreath. The single ribbon bow has been replaced with a double bow. The border consists of denticles.

DIE PREPARATION Hubs are used for the first time this year to prepare obverse and reverse dies. A total of 5 obverse and 5 reverse dies were used. Three of each were prepared from hubs and two of each were prepared with punches and a graver.

Obverse. The hub had the bust of Liberty, the Liberty Cap, and the Pole to the bust. After this was punched in the die, the engraver punched the

numerals and letters necessary, cut the denticles and strengthened various details on the die. When the dies were prepared without a hub, the engraver had to cut the entire design by hand.

Reverse. The hub had the wreath, the words UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, the ribbon, stem ends and the words HALF CENT. The engraver punched the berries, and the numerals of the fraction. He then cut the denticles and strengthened various places. The hand-cut dies are of an entirely different style and closely resemble the dies used on Cents.

PLANCHETS The use of planchets made from sheet copper seems to continue through this year. The quality of the copper, however, seems to decline. The planchets are the same weight as 1793 (approximately 104 grains) but are wider and thinner. The edge is lettered TWO HUNDRED FOR A DOLLAR followed by a single leaf. The lettering is in two styles, large and small. On Varieties 1 and 2 both styles are used. Varieties 3 through 9 are known only with small style edge lettering.

VARIETY #1a



Equivalents G-9, E-13

Obverse 1 "The High Head". The head which is hand cut is closer to LIBERTY than the date. The numerals 1, 7 and 9 are recut. They are shallow, small, and widely spaced. On many worn specimens they cannot be seen. The denticles are small. Clash marks of the wreath can be seen occasionally from the nose to the neck of Liberty. These marks are caused by having the dies come together without a planchet and will produce a reverse impression on the opposite die when it strikes later coins.

Reverse A This die was made with the hub; however, the impression of the hub was not as deep as on later reverses. As a result of this, the



branches of the wreath have 15 leaves each. Each branch has 4 berries. The first inside berry on the left branch of the wreath is attached to the left side of the first inside leaf and is very small. It does not have a stem. The 2 in the denominator is higher than the zeroes. On specimens higher than Fine condition, a die flaw in the form of a ridge can be seen running from the M in AMERICA to the border. Clash marks of the obverse die can be seen to the left of H and to the right of F in HALF on some specimens.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 Usually seen in less than Very Fine condition. This variety has large edge lettering to distinguish it from the next variety.

VARIETY #1b



(Large Edge Letters)



(Small Edge Letters)

Equivalents Not in Gilbert, E-13a**Obverse 1** The same as Variety #1a.**Reverse A** The same as Variety #1a.**Die Breaks** None known.**Rarity 7** This variety has small edge lettering which is the usual style seen on 1794's. This rarity rating will probably decrease when collectors examine the edges of 1794's and compare them.

VARIETY #2a



(Specimen from the collection of Julius Reiver)

**Equivalents** G-5, E-9**Obverse 2** This obverse has its head punched from the hub. The diagnostic feature of this die is the date. The numeral 1 is high and distant from the 7, so that the 7 appears to be low. Clash marks of the reverse die are often seen in front of the chin and neck of Liberty.**Reverse B** This die was made from the hub and has 15 leaves on each branch. On specimens in Very Fine condition or higher, an additional leaf

can be seen on each side of HALF. There are 5 berries on the left branch of the wreath and 4 on the right branch. The numerator of the fraction touches the left ribbon.

Die Breaks None known.**Rarity 2** Tied with Variety #9 for the commonest 1794, it is often seen in worn condition. In Extremely Fine or higher condition it is very scarce.

This variety has small edge lettering.

VARIETY #2b

Equivalents Not in Gilbert; mentioned in Empire.**Obverse 2** The same as Variety #2a.**Reverse B** The same as Variety #2a.**Die Breaks** None known.**Rarity 7** This variety has large edge lettering as is usually seen on Variety #1a. I know of 4 specimens. This variety, and #1b, were first mentioned in 1924 when the Alvord Collection was sold.

VARIETY #3



(Composite)

**Equivalents** G-7, E-11

Obverse 3 The second of the dies prepared with the head hub. The date is unevenly spaced with the 7 and 9 close. The border denticles are the same width as the space between them. The 4 of the date is distant from the bust.

Reverse C The die is cut by hand and is of the same style as the Cent. To the right of T in CENT

there is a pair of leaves in a vertical position. The left branch of the wreath has fourteen leaves and 6 berries. The right branch has eighteen leaves and 6 berries.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 6 Seldom available in any condition other than very worn.

VARIETY #4

**Equivalents** G-4, E-8

Obverse 4 The head hub was used for the last time on this die. The main feature is the date, in which the 9 is low in relation to the other numerals.

Reverse C The same as Variety #3.

Die Breaks Obverse. There is a bulge from the Liberty Cap to the border, left of 1 in the date. Gilbert refers to this as a die break. I believe this

bulge is due to warping of the die in the hardening process.

Reverse. A break starts at the rim above D of UNITED and runs through that letter. The break continues on some specimens through the top of STATES to O of OF. Gilbert also lists two other cracks which appear to be clash marks.

Rarity 4 Another coin which is usually worn and difficult to obtain in Very Fine or higher condition.

**Equivalents** G-8, E-12

Obverse 3 The same as Variety #3.

Reverse D The third and last die from the hub. The sixteenth leaf on each branch can usually be seen. On the right branch of the wreath, the extra leaf is attached to the fourth inside leaf and points to F in HALF. On the left branch, it is just a partial leaf to the right of the fourth inside leaf, and is parallel to H in HALF. The left branch of the wreath has 5 berries and the right branch has 6. There are 2 berries on the right branch of the

wreath that do not show on any of the other hub-prepared reverses. One berry is below F in OF. The other one is below the left foot of the first A in AMERICA.

Die Breaks Obverse. The rim denticles crumble over RTY of LIBERTY.

Rarity 5 Usually seen in worn condition. This die combination seems to have been arbitrarily interrupted as the reverse die will reappear after another reverse is used with the obverse die.

VARIETY #6

**Equivalents** G-6, E-10

Obverse 3 The same as used on Varieties #3 and #5, but always seen with clash marks in front of the neck of Liberty.

Reverse E This is a hand-cut die which is the same style as reverse G. The diagnostic feature is the first inside pair of leaves on the right branch. These leaves are directly below T of CENT. On coins in Extremely Fine or higher condition, a line

is seen connecting the branches of the wreath where they terminate at the top.

Die Breaks Obverse. The rim crumbling noted on Variety #5 becomes larger causing the letters ERTY to be faint on most specimens. A break begins at the center of the lower loop of B in LIBERTY and runs to the rim between B and E.

Rarity 6 Another short-lived die combination. Most specimens are seen in worn condition.

VARIETY #7

**Equivalents** G-2, E-6

Obverse 5 This die is noted for its high relief of the hair. On Fine condition specimens the hair will exhibit large flat areas where the coin has worn. The 4 of the date almost touches the bust of Liberty.

Reverse E The same as used on Variety #6.

Die Breaks Reverse. A crack begins at the

left border and passes through E of UNITED, two outside leaves, the branch of the wreath, an inside leaf, and the top of H in HALF. This crack terminates in the field above the last mentioned letter.

Rarity 6 Almost a rarity 7 coin, it is usually quite worn when available.

VARIETY #8



(Composite)

**Equivalents** G-3, E-7

Obverse 5 The same as Variety #7.

Reverse D The same as Variety #5.

Die Breaks Gilbert notes a break from the border to the wreath passing through the second T in STATES. I have never seen this.

Rarity 6 This variety, like many 1794's, is hard to locate and usually very worn.



Equivalents G-1, E-5

Obverse 5 The same as Variety #7.

Reverse B The same as Variety #2.

Die Breaks Obverse. A break begins at the left border opposite half-way between the top and bottom of the Liberty Cap. This crack runs downward through the Liberty Cap to the hair.

Reverse. Rim crumbles below the denominator of the fraction.

Rarity 2 One of the two common varieties of this date, it is the most common in the higher grades but extremely rare in About Uncirculated or Uncirculated condition.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

- A. High head with low date is #1. Large edge lettering is #1a. Small edge lettering is #1b.
- B. Large head with 1 high and 7 low is #2. Small edge lettering is #2a. Large edge lettering is #2b.
- C. Large head with 7 high and 9 low is #4.
- D. Large head with 7 and 9 close. The 4 of date is distant from bust.

Examine reverse:

- a. Left branch of wreath ends in a single leaf. Two leaves under T of CENT is #6.
- b. Left branch of wreath ends in a single leaf. Two leaves to right of T in CENT is #3.

- c. Left branch of wreath ends in a pair of leaves. Berry in wreath below F of OF is #5.

- E. Head with high hair relief. The 4 of date almost touches bust.

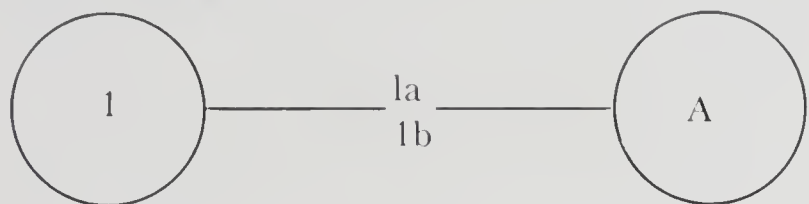
Examine reverse:

- a. Left branch of wreath ends in a pair of leaves. Berry in wreath below F of OF is #8.
- b. Left branch of wreath ends in a pair of leaves. Numerator of fraction touches left ribbon is #9.
- c. Left branch of wreath ends in a single leaf. Two leaves under T of CENT is #7.

1794
EMISSION SEQUENCE

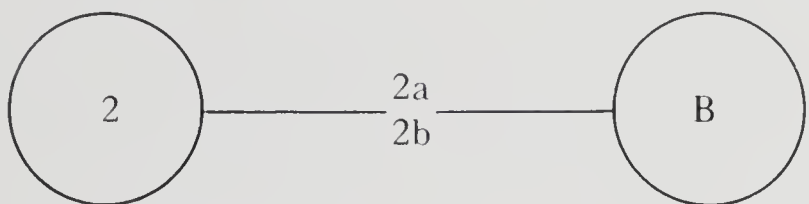
<u>Obverse</u>	<u>Variety No.</u>	<u>Reverse</u>
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First Striking



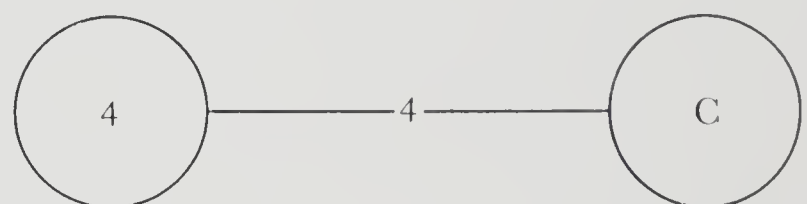
Second Striking

First Press

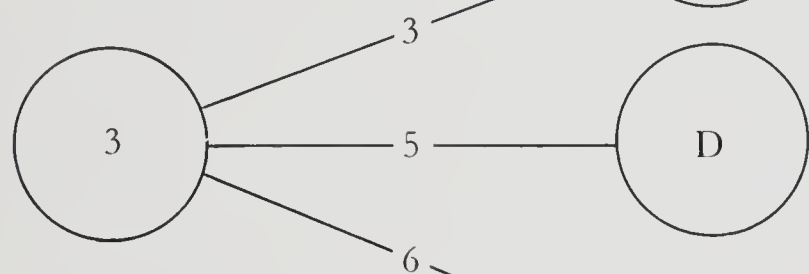


<u>Obverse</u>	<u>Variety No.</u>	<u>Reverse</u>
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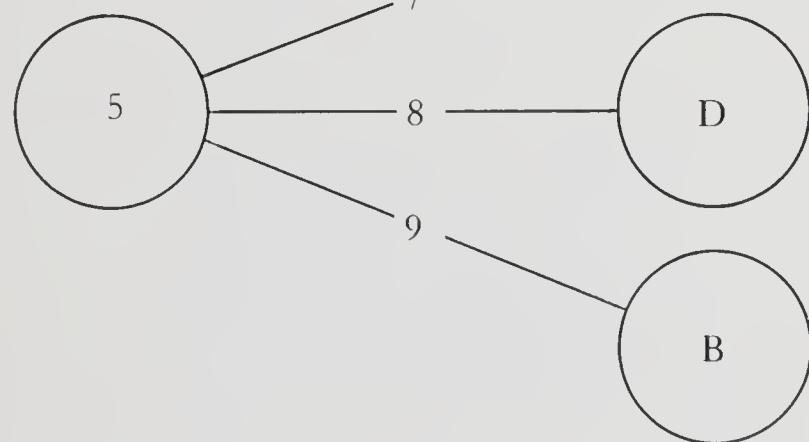
Second Press



*From
First
Press*



Third Striking



GENERAL COMMENTS

The coinage for the year as reported is 81,600, which were delivered as follows:

First Quarter	10,000
Second Quarter	48,000
Third Quarter	23,600

The minting of the Half Cent was apparently done when the coining presses were not minting Cents. There were 918,521 Cents minted in this year and were struck from 62 different die combinations.

In preparing the Emission Sequence, I have assumed that the first striking corresponds to the delivery of 10,000 for the first quarter. The second striking seems to have occurred on two coining presses, but I do not believe that the 48,000 delivered in the second quarter are the total of the second striking. Apparently some of the third striking are included in this total.

It is interesting to note that the third striking reverse dies are all ones that were used previously and are combined with a new hand-cut obverse die. This indicates that the Mint had been saving dies which were serviceable for a time when they might be used.

An early listing of the die varieties of this date was done by Ed. Frossard in his 1879 work, "U. S. Cents and Half Cents, 1793-1857." The following varieties were listed: #9, #4, #2, #5, #1, and #7.

In the June 1908 "Numismatist," Chas. Steigerwalt listed two additional varieties, #3 and #6, which were mulings of dies known to Frossard. In this article Mr. Steigerwalt assigned obverse numbers and reverse letters to the known dies. The method of numbering the obverses was based on the order in which they appeared on the Frossard plate. Thus the first obverse illustrated became No. 1. The second obverse illustrated became No. 2, etc. The reverses were lettered in accordance with the obverses, thus, the two then known reverses used with obverse No. 1 were lettered A and B. The reverse of obverse No. 2 became reverse C and the additional reverse of obverse 4 became reverse D.

When Gilbert published his book in 1916, he numbered his varieties in the same order as Steigerwalt and added his No. 3, which was a muling of Steigerwalt's No. 1 obverse with reverse D. Apparently this variety was discovered between 1908 and 1916. I have assigned #8 to this variety. Since the publication of Gilbert's book the only additions have been the discovery that #1 and #2 have two types of edge lettering. This was first noted by F. R. Alvord and published in 1924 when Mr. Alvord's collection was sold. It is interesting to note that Frossard was aware of all the known dies, but not all mulings, when he wrote his book in 1879.

CHAPTER 3

1795

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Obverse. Liberty with cap. This design has been attributed to John Smith Gardner, Assistant Engraver to Robert Scot. This is the same general design as the preceding year but the bust of Liberty is much smaller. This design was used on 1795, 1796 and 1797 dated coins. Gardner held the position of Assistant Engraver from November 1794 to April 1796.

The **reverse** is similar to the preceding year but has some differences. This design is used through the first die of 1802.

DIE PREPARATION A hub was used to punch in the bust of Liberty and Liberty cap on the obverse die. The engraver then punched in the letters LIBERTY, the numerals of the date, the pole to the bust, and the denticles which show on the border.

The reverse die evidently was not prepared from a hub, as was done on some of the 1794 reverses. The method of preparation appears to be the use of punches and the graver. Eight different dies were prepared by this method and used in the years 1795 to 1802.

PLANCHETS The use of clipped and spoiled Cents is very prevalent in this year. The weight of the planchet was officially changed from 104 grains to 84 grains, but the weights vary from 77 grains to 123 grains on those which are supposed to weigh 84 grains. There are lesser variations on those which are supposed to weigh 104 grains.

The change in weight was done in accordance with an Act of Congress dated March 3, 1795.

The use of planchets made from rolled-out Talbot Allum & Lee Cents starts with this year's dated coinage. These were used on Variety #6a. Parts of the design of the Talbot Allum & Lee Cents may usually be seen on these coins.

The edge is lettered TWO HUNDRED FOR A DOLLAR followed by a leaf on those coins which were supposed to weigh 104 grains. The size of the edge letters used on 1795 dated specimens is different from the previous years. The letters are similar to the large style used in early 1794. The edge is plain on those which were supposed to weigh 84 grains.

VARIETY #1



(Specimen from the collection of Paul Munson)



Equivalents G-1, E-14

Obverse 1 The numeral 1 of the date is made from the punch for the letter I in LIBERTY.

Reverse A Seventeen leaves and four berries on the left branch of the wreath, sixteen leaves and four berries on the right branch of the wreath. There is a berry on each side of the bow.

Die Breaks Obverse. Gilbert reports a break before the I in the date. I have never seen this.

Rarity 2 Tied for the second most common 1795. This coin is known as the Lettered Edge with Pole 1795. One specimen that was in the Brobston Collection was struck on a light weight planchet but has the lettered edge.

**Equivalents** G-3, E-15

Obverse 2 The diagnostic feature of the die is the comma-like mark between the 1 and 7 of the date. I believe this to be a die cutting error. The top of the mark was intended to indicate where the 1 of the date was to be punched; the lower part is a cut by the graving tool which was not corrected. The letters I and R of LIBERTY also have a dot-like mark at their tops. I believe

these to be marks which were intended to indicate the position of L and E in LIBERTY, as this word is to the left in relationship to the bust.

Reverse A Same die as on Variety #1 except it is now warped at AMER of AMERICA.

Die Breaks The reverse warping is sometimes referred to as a break.

Rarity 3 Another well-known 1795 variety, the Punctuated Date with Lettered Edge.

VARIETY #2b

Equivalents G-8, E-15a

Obverse 2 The Punctuated Date.

Reverse A Berry on each side of bow. Warped at AMER of AMERICA.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 7 The same die combination as on Variety 2a but struck on a thin (84 grain) planchet. The rarest of three varieties known as Punctuated Date with Plain Edge.

VARIETY #3

**Equivalents** G-7, E-19

Obverse 2 The Punctuated Date.

Reverse B Left branch of the wreath has 5 berries instead of 4 as on reverse A. The right branch as 4 berries, with one on each side of the wreath branch below the first A in AMERICA. This die is warped at ALF ENT making these

letters impossible to read after a limited amount of circulation of a coin.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 6 This variety can be obtained unattributed if one carefully examines all Punctuated Date with Plain Edge 1795's offered.



Equivalents G-4, E-16

Obverse 2 The Punctuated Date. On many specimens of this variety, a large bulge is present at the border opposite Liberty's face.

Reverse C There are no berries on either side of the bow. This can be noticed even on very worn specimens. The die is warped at STA of STATES.

Die Breaks Reverse. Very early in the life of this die a crack develops from the first T of STATES to the wreath and diagonally through the F of HALF and the right branch of the



wreath to R in AMERICA. This crack is not well defined on this variety but the die sinking caused by it usually makes the words HALF CENT impossible to read on coins in less than Fine condition.

Rarity 3 This is the last of the Punctuated Date with Plain Edge 1795's and is the most plentiful. The planchets used for this variety are usually very poor quality with nicks and cracks at the border. These defects were probably caused by the rolling process used in the preparation of planchets.

VARIETY #5a



Equivalents G-6, E-18

Obverse 3 This die is easily noticed as the pole, which runs from the neck of the bust of Liberty to the border, is missing. The die appears to be obverse 1 which has been altered and re-hardened. The date area is slightly warped, causing the 5 to be faint on Fine Condition speci-



mens and, in the lower conditions, it is missing.

Reverse C Always seen with the die break in a more advanced stage.

Die Breaks None known other than mentioned previously.

Rarity 4 Struck on a thin planchet weighing approximately 84 grains.

VARIETY #5b

Equivalents G-6, E-18

Obverse 3 No pole to bust.

Reverse C No berries on each side of bow.

Die Breaks As on 5a.

Rarity 5 Struck on a thick planchet weighing

approximately 115 grains.

In listing a and b varieties of this die combination, I am not setting forth the order of emission, but merely separating planchet differences which were known to Gilbert.



Equivalents G-5, E-17

Obverse 3 No pole to bust.

Reverse D One berry to the left of the bow and none to the right. The left branch of the wreath has 18 leaves and 3 berries.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 2 Struck on a thin planchet and usually on rolled-out Talbot Allum & Lee Cents. Parts of the design of these cents can usually be seen.

VARIETY #6b

Equivalents Not in Gilbert, E-17

Obverse 3 No pole to bust.

Reverse D One berry to the left of the bow.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 7 Struck on a thick planchet such as described for Variety #5b. Discovered by the author in 1953. There are five specimens known to me.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

A. Pole to bust. Date not punctuated. Reverse with berry on each side of bow is #1.

B. No pole to bust. Examine reverse.

a. No berries on each side of bow. #5a is on a thin planchet. #5b is on a thick planchet.

b. One berry to left of bow and none on right. #6a is on a thin planchet. #6b is on a thick planchet.

C. Punctuated Date. Pole to bust. Examine reverse.

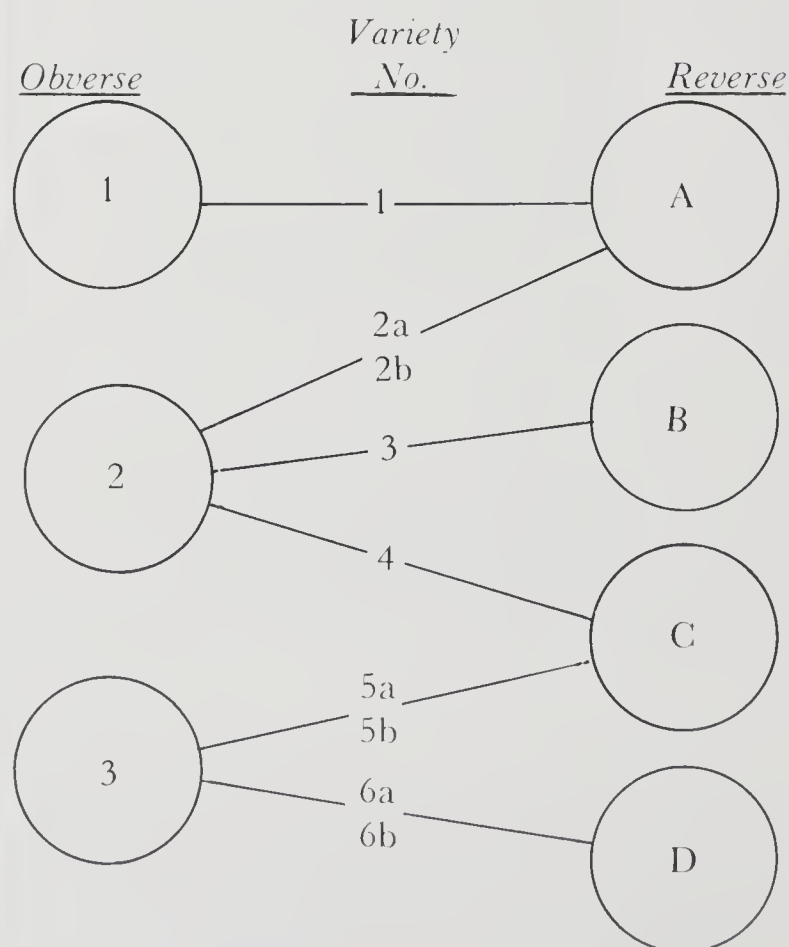
a. No berries on each side of bow is #4.

b. Berries on each side of bow:

(a) Five berries on left branch is #3.

(b) Four berries on left branch. #2a is on a thick planchet and has a lettered edge. #2b is on a thin planchet and has a plain edge.

1795 EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the calendar year is 25,600. These are apparently some of the Lettered Edge specimens, which were delivered by the Coiner on December 5, 1795. On December 28, 1795 the Mint began coinage of Cents weighing 168 grains, in accordance with an Act of Congress dated March 3, 1795. This Act reduced the Half Cent weight to 84 grains. Half Cent deliveries by the Coiner in 1796 were as follows:

To February 28	60,000
March 12	2,000
March 18	32,000
March 21	15,000
April 19	3,350
June 8	1,740
October 14 (date of warrant)	1,390

It is my opinion that all coins delivered through June 8 were dated 1795. This results in a presumed 1795 dated coinage of 139,690.

The National Archives has accounting records with the following entries which explain the source of some planchets.

"December 24, 1795 Cents spoiled & clipt returned - 14 lbs., 15 dwt - most of these wair maid 1/2 cents"

"March 9, 1796. There was 33 lb of spoiled cents maid in 1/2 cents & weighed again"

"August 12, 1796. Weight of 1/2 cents in planchets 16 lb 13 oz"

Reference is made in a recent auction catalogue (Lester Merkin 3/28-29/1969) in which the statement is made that the Mint bought 1076

lbs. of Talbot Allum & Lee tokens at the beginning of 1796. It further states that slightly under 32,000 overstrikes were made from these tokens. I have not seen the record for the purchase of these tokens and I question the arithmetic of the number of overstrikes.

The weight of Talbot Allum & Lee tokens I have weighed averages 148 grains. Dividing this into 7,000 (the number of grains per lb.), I arrive at 47.3 tokens per lb. This amount multiplied by 1076 equals 50,895 tokens. The tokens are thicker than Half Cent planchets, so they must have been rolled and clipped. Assuming one token was used for each Half Cent planchet, the number of overstrikes is 50,895. If the lbs. bought (1076) were on the troy scale (which is not used for a base metal such as copper), the total number of tokens would be 41,878.

Gilbert lists as his No. 2 an example of Variety #1 struck on a thick planchet with a plain edge. The specimen in the Alvord Collection was an altered example of Variety #1 which had the edge lettering removed. S. H. Chapman examined another example of Gilbert No. 2 and pronounced it also an alteration. Since that time (1924), there have been no examples known to me which have been classified as genuine examples of Gilbert No. 2. As the operation which lettered the edge of planchets was apparently done apart from the coining operation, it seems possible that a coin such as Gilbert No. 2 could have been made.

CHAPTER 4

1796

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Identical to 1795.

DIE PREPARATION Identical to 1795.

PLANCHETS All specimens are on planchets

which seem to be made from clipped and spoiled Cents.

All known specimens have plain edges.

VARIETY #1



(Specimen from the collection of William H. Fenn, III)



Equivalents G-2, E-21

Obverse 1 Die was prepared without a pole to the bust of Liberty which is similar to obverse 3 of 1795.

Reverse A The diagnostic feature of this die is the triple set of leaves to the right of F in HALF. There are 18 leaves and 4 berries on the left branch, and 16 leaves and 3 berries on the right branch.

Die Breaks Obverse. Every specimen I have

seen or viewed in a photograph has a horizontal break from the left border at 9 o'clock, through the bust of Liberty, to the right border at 2:30 o'clock. Presumably at least one striking was made without this break.

Rarity 6 Considered to be the rarest Half Cent when it comes to price. This is due to its publicity among coin collectors for almost 100 years. There is one known in Uncirculated condition and approximately 12 known in lower condition.

VARIETY #2



(Specimen from the collection of William H. Fenn, III)



Equivalents G-1, E-20

Obverse 2 Die has a pole to the bust of Liberty. Early in its use the die became warped and produced a bulge to the left of the bust.

Reverse A As on prior variety.

Die Breaks None known.

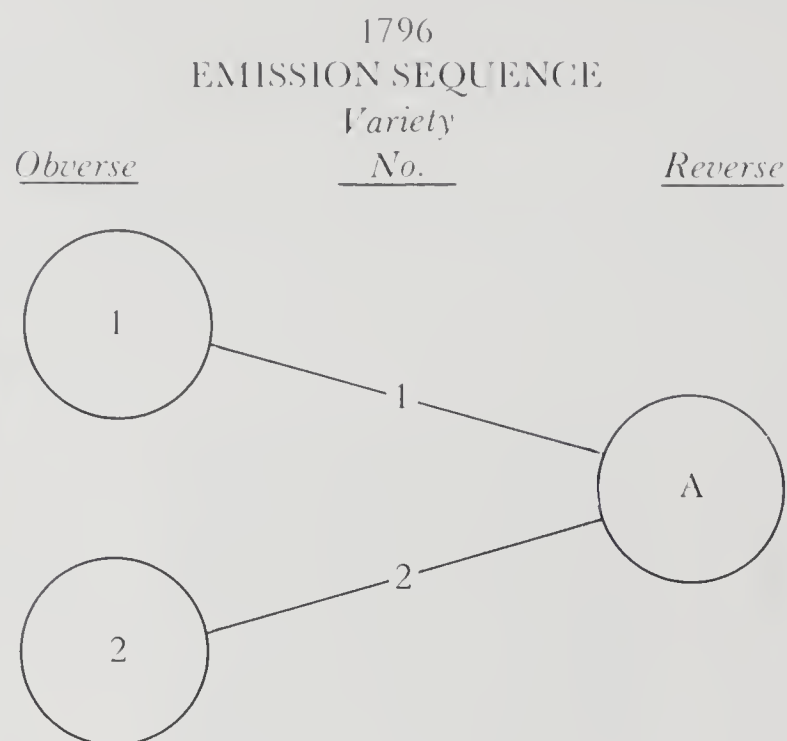
Rarity 5 Another well-publicized rarity. As date collecting developed very early, the rarity of this coin was known.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine the obverse and classify:

- A. No pole to bust is #1.
- B. Pole to bust is #2.

A word of caution. Be on the alert for electrotypes and other copies. Electrotypes were considered acceptable as facsimilies by collectors until about 50 years ago. These can be identified by their imperfections in manufacture and a lack of ring when tapped. Casts also exist which usually have no ring. In his monograph, "United States Cents and Half Cents", Ed. Frossard on page 41 also mentions struck copies. As this work was published in 1879, the problem of forgeries of this rare date is not a new one. The author at one time owned an electrotpe of Variety #1 which he had a difficult time convincing another collector that it was not genuinc. Before acquiring any 1796, a collector should use great caution.



GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports 115,480 Half Cents delivered in the calendar year. In recent years attempts have been made to explain the contradiction of the plentifulness of the 1795's and scarcity of 1796's, when comparing the reported 1795 coinage of 25,-600 to the 1796 reported coinage.

In The National Archives there is a book which is known as the "Account Book for the Delivery of Cents and Half Cents 1796-1803". Additionally there are other records which set forth the coinage of Half Cents during this period. What is stated is this:

Half Cents delivered in 1795 - fourth quarter only	25,600
Half Cents delivered during first quarter of 1796	109,000
Half Cents delivered during second quarter of 1796	5,090
Half Cents delivered during third quarter to November 24th 1796	1,390

The important thing is that nowhere is it stated what the coins were dated, so that any attempt to answer this enigma is strictly a guess. The first part of the presumed answer is covered in the previous chapter on 1795, where I have also included the second quarter coinage of 5,090. Thus I believe that the actual 1796 dated coinage for both varieties is 1,390. I am basing this on two reasons. First, if one applies the rule of thumb that 3% of a coinage has survived, this would equal approximately 42 specimens, which is the approximate number known. The second reason is more complex. There are at least six Uncirculated examples of this date. This is a disproportionately high number in this condition for the number known, and to me indicates that someone in 1796 or 1797 (probably a Mint or bank employee) realized that the number of dated specimens minted was small and accordingly saved some. As I have stated previously, these are only guesses, but, for what it is worth, it is my opinion that only 1,390 dated 1796 Half Cents were coined.

CHAPTER 5

1797

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Identical to 1795.

DIE PREPARATION Identical to 1795.

PLANCHETS The use of spoiled Cents and Talbot Allum & Lee Cents continue. The quality of the copper in Half Cents dated this year varies greatly, with most of it being of low quality. The

weights of the planchets vary from 73 to 96 grains. The widths of planchets vary from 22 1/2 mm to 25 mm.

The edges are of three styles: lettered, gripped and plain. The lettered and gripped edges will be elaborated on as varieties.

VARIETY #1



(Normal obverse)



(Plain planchet)



(Shattered obverse)



(Talbot Allum & Lee planchet)

Equivalents G-4, E-24

Obverse 1 The 1 over 1. A thinner 1 directly over the 1 of the date. There are also dots over the 7's of the date. I believe these features to be caused by a punch which was used as the first step in engraving the date. As this die is used, it develops numerous cracks and bulges.

Reverse A Seventeen leaves and 5 berries on the left branch of the wreath. Sixteen leaves and 3 berries on the right branch of the wreath. On specimens in less than Fine condition, this reverse is usually lacking detail in various areas due to the unevenness of the planchets used and the failure of the obverse die in this striking.

Die Breaks Obverse. The die becomes shattered from eight different breaks, according to Gilbert. The most prominent ones which can be seen on worn specimens are: a crack from the border through B in LIBERTY to the head, and a diagonal break running from the neck of the bust of Liberty toward the border at the 2 o'clock position. On many specimens, this crack fades out into a bulged area at RTY of LIBERTY, which usu-

ally cannot be made out. There are two die flaws which are usually referred to as breaks. First, there are two bulges to the left of L in LIBERTY which connect to the border. Secondly, a line connecting the inner and outer edges of the Liberty Cap just below its staff.

Reverse. Reported by Gilbert to have two different breaks, both of which I have never seen on this striking.

Rarity 2 The most plentiful coin of this date. In my collection I have four specimens which I classify as: Perfect obverse die struck on Talbot Allum & Lee planchet, and a plain planchet. The other two are the shattered obverse die on a Talbot Allum & Lee planchet and on a plain planchet.

The edge is plain. Some Talbot Allum & Lee overstrikes will show edge lettering which were on the planchet. One specimen in my collection has the letters NE CEN on its edge and was struck over a 1795 Talbot Allum & Lee cent.

This variety is generally available in the lower grades of condition. In Very Fine or higher, it is quite scarce.



Equivalents G-3, E-23

Obverse 2 This die is recognized by the border which has long denticles. The bust of Liberty is centered. There are no defects or breaks known to me on this die.

Reverse A As on the previous variety, except that more detail can usually be seen on lower grade condition coins. This is because the obverse die is not shattered and the planchets seem to be more uniform.



Die Breaks Reverse. A line crack from the border at the 2 of the fraction, across the top of U and N of UNITED, and then to the border above I in that word.

Rarity 4 Decidedly hard to locate when you want one. The obverse can be easily recognized when very worn. The edge is plain.

The planchets seem to be of very poor quality copper. This coin is known struck on Talbot Alum & Lee Cent planchets, but they are much scarcer than on Variety #1.

VARIETY #3a



Equivalents G-2, E22b

Obverse 3 "The low head". The bust of Liberty is too low in its field. The numerals 1 and 9 of the date appear to be hand cut. The 7's appear to be punched. This die usually shows a ridge-like bulge at the chin of the bust of Liberty and runs toward the right border.

Reverse B Seventeen leaves on each branch of the wreath, with four berries on the left branch and three on the right branch. The additional leaf on the right branch of the wreath points to E in AMERICA.



Die Breaks Reverse. A crack runs from the left border, through E in UNITED, to the wreath where the crack branches. The upper branch runs to the right foot of H in HALF. The lower branch runs to the top of C in CENT. This crack develops during the use of the die and is never prominent. A specimen must be in at least Very Fine condition, and a late strike, to see this crack in its entirety.

Rarity 4 Struck on a plain edge planchet, to distinguish it from the following varieties.

The planchets used on Varieties #3a, 3b, and 3c all appear to be undersized and made from rolled-out Cents.

VARIETY #3b

Equivalents G-1, E-22
Obverse 3 The same as 3a.
Reverse B The same as 3a.
Die Breaks The same as 3a.
Rarity 5 The Lettered Edge variety. The edge

lettering is smaller and more uneven than in the years 1793 to 1795. There is no leaf after the word DOLLAR.
This coin has been well publicized for about 100 years. Most specimens are worn.

VARIETY #3c



(Gripped Edge)

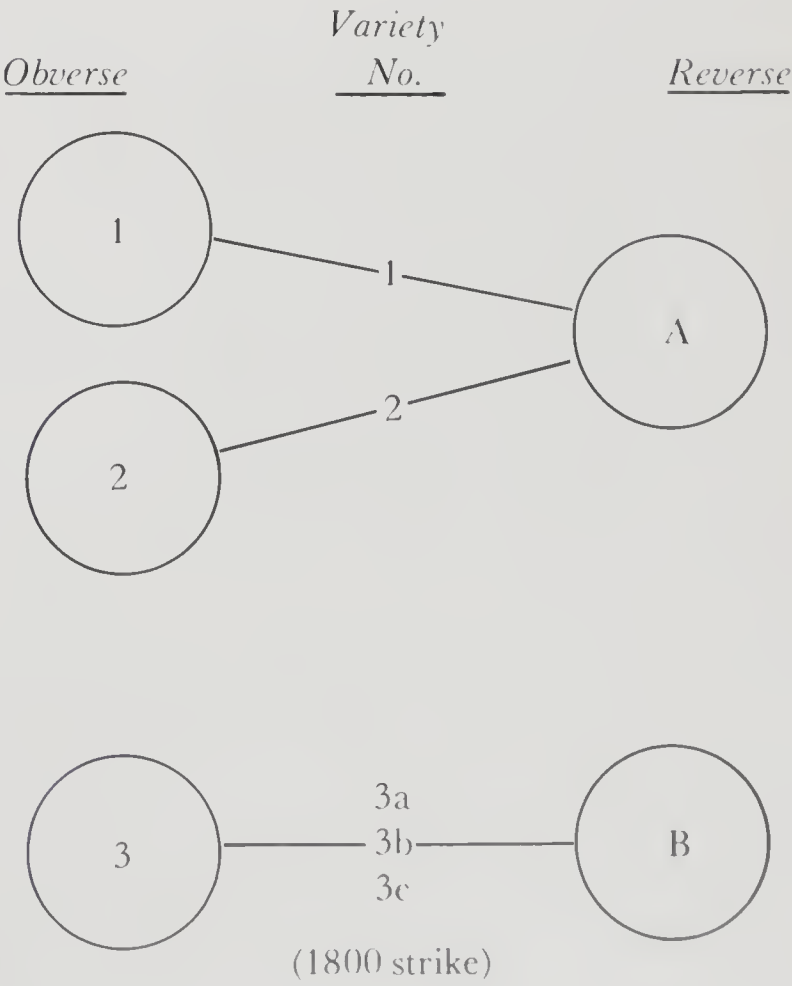
Equivalents Not in Gilbert, E-22a
Obverse 3 The same as 3a.
Reverse B The same as 3a.
Die Breaks The same as 3a.
Rarity 7 The Gripped Edge variety. The edge has vertical indentations as if the planchet were

gripped by a collar with sharp ridges in it. A similar device was used on Cents bearing the same date (Sheldon 120b and 121).
As this variety has not been known for many years, perhaps its rarity rating will decline as more are identified. It was discovered by David O. Hughes in the 1940's.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

- Examine obverse and classify:
- A. Bust of Liberty centered, with long denticles at border, is #2.
 - B. Bust of Liberty centered, with short denticles. 1 over 1 of date is #1.
 - C. Bust of Liberty is low in field.
- Examine edge of coin.
- a. Plain edge is #3a.
 - b. Lettered edge is #3b.
 - c. If edge has vertical indentations, it is #3c.

1797
EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports 107,048 coined for the calendar year. These were delivered on the following dates:

April 24	17,280
April 29	10,000
April 29	8,600
May 2	17,280
May 3	17,280
May 6	18,000
May 8	18,608

These were apparently struck from planchets which are recorded in the "Account Book for the Delivery of Cents and Half Cents 1796 - 1803" under the date December 12, 1796. "By copper recd in planchets for Half Cents - 1914 1b". Another entry in this book, dated February 6, 1797, reads "The above spoild cents that were left of the above copper 27 1b - 15 oz are now roled down for half cents and mixed with the late copper".

The source of the planchets in the first entry can only be guessed as a contract with a person or persons unknown. In view of the number of Talbot Allum & Lee over-strikes which occur on Variety #1, presumably they were included in those received on December 12, 1796.

For many years the official records of coinage have shown a total of \$60.83 value of Half Cents coined in the year 1799. As no 1799 dated specimens have ever been reported, it has been assumed that the coinage in that year was dated 1797. It is my opinion that the 1799 coinage was actually struck in 1797 and consisted of either Variety #1 or #2 coins. I base this assumption on information taken from the previously mentioned account book located in The National Archives. An entry dated April 16, 1799 gives the number of Half Cents on hand as 12,170. On the same date, there were delivered to N. Thomas for the Treasurer of the Mint 3,530 Half Cents. On May 13, 1799, 8,640 Half Cents were delivered to the Bank of the United States.

On one of the last pages of the account book, there is a summary which apparently has been used as the original source of information in the past. This summary is headed:

Statement of Cents and half Cents delivered
the Treasurer of the Mint from the 1 of
March 1793 to The 30th of Augt 1799
as per Receipts

It should be noted that this statement does not give the dates which the coins bear. This problem seems to have been left for those of us who are interested to attempt to figure it out 172 years later. On this statement it shows 12,167 Half Cents as being DELIVERED to the Treasurer of the Mint after March 1799. I believe the Half Cents on hand as of April 16, 1799 to be undelivered 1797 dated coinage minted in the spring of 1797. A possible reason for the "delivery" of the 12,167 Half Cents being recorded as occurring after March 1799 is a provision of the Act of Congress dated April 24, 1800 which stated:

"Sec. 1. . . . That a sum equal to the amount of the cents and half cents which shall have been coined at the Mint and delivered to the Treasurer, subsequent to March 3, 1799, shall be . . . appropriated for the purchase of copper for the further coinage of cents and half cents . . . (and with similar appropriations to be continued from year to year)."

As previously stated, I believe the 1799 delivery to be Variety #1 or #2 coins. The coins struck with the low head obverse (die 3) appear to have been delivered in 1800. It should be noted that all of these appear to be struck on rolled-out Cent planchets. It has been reported that at least one specimen has been struck over a 1798 Large Cent.

Based on the above, it appears to me 1797 dated coins were DELIVERED as follows:

Second Quarter of 1797	107,048
Second Quarter of 1799	12,170
Second Quarter of 1800	8,622
For a Total of	<u>127,840</u>

1800

DESIGN DESCRIPTION In this year a new obverse design was used. The head of Liberty is the Draped Bust design by Gilbert Stuart, which was first used in 1795 on the Silver Dollar. This design was adopted on the Large Cent in 1796. In 1798 the hair design of the Large Cent was altered slightly by Robert Scot, and is known by Large Cent collectors as Style 2 Hair. This is the style which was adopted for the Half Cent. The style of letter punches used for LIBERTY is also of the second style, which first appeared on the Large Cent in 1798. The Half Cent was the last silver or copper coin to adopt the Draped Bust design.

The reverse die is a carry-over from the previous date of 1797, with single leaves at the end of each branch. The lettering is also of the earlier period and is referred to as Style 1 Lettering by Large Cent collectors.

DIE PREPARATION A hub was used for the obverse to put in the head of Liberty. I am of the opinion that the hub contained marks where the letter E in LIBERTY should be placed, and the numerals 180, thus leaving to the engraver the job of first punching the E and then punching in the letters LIB and RTY and the numerals of the date. There is a center dot located on the hair,

which is worn away after a limited amount of circulation of a coin. It appears to me that one hub was used throughout the Draped Bust series. The numeral punches used for 180 of the date are identical through 1807.

The reverse die was apparently prepared at an earlier date but was not used. This die has defects that appear to be deep rust spots running from the E in UNITED through the wreath to the C in CENT. On Uncirculated specimens, many other defects are seen in the field, noticeably below the ends of the wreath and adjacent to D of UNITED. There are 17 leaves and 3 berries on the left branch of the wreath and 16 leaves and 4 berries on the right branch. The numerals of the fraction denominator are crudely cut.

PLANCHETS Records in The National Archives indicate that in this year both rolled-out Large Cent and Boulton planchets were used. The Boulton planchets were shipped from England via the vessel *POMONA* on April 19 and consisted of six casks weighing 20 cwt 20 lbs. 10 oz. This amounts to 186,886 planchets, all of which were evidently used for 1800 dated specimens.

The edge is plain and is on all subsequent dates.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-25

Obverse 1 Only one known obverse die.

Reverse A Only one known reverse die.

Die Breaks Obverse. The rim crumbles and on some specimens it extends from about 8 o'clock position to 12 o'clock. The crumbling first starts at the 11 o'clock position.

Gilbert notes, "This coin is sometimes found with the entire date double cut, and on some specimens a break is shown through 1 of date and



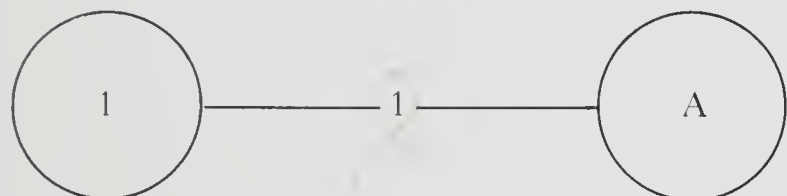
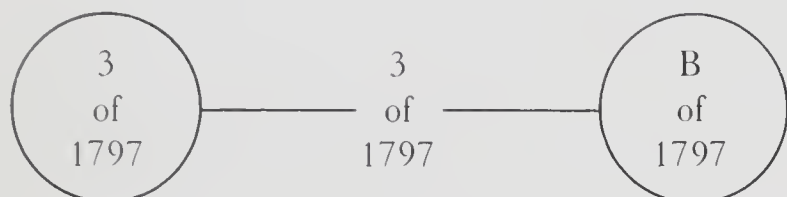
the curl to the left." I have never seen either of these.

Reverse. No known breaks. However, the defects noted in Die Preparation are frequently referred to as a die break.

Rarity 2 There are a number of specimens in Uncirculated condition. Apparently a small hoard was found after they were no longer current coins, and entered numismatic circulation. Frossard in 1879 rated this coin as common except in Uncirculated condition.

1800
EMISSION SEQUENCE

Obverse Variety
 No. Reverse



GENERAL COMMENTS

The coinage reported by the Mint is 211,530 delivered on the following dates:

April 29	5,750
May 16	2,872
June 5	12,356
September 17	12,000
September 18	12,000
October 4	2,000
December 5	32,000
December 10	27,000
December 12	105,552

It is my opinion that those delivered through May 16 were Variety #3 of 1797, and were made from rolled-out Large Cents. These amount to 8,622. There is an entry in the Account Book in The National Archives dated March 14, 1800: "Delivered to the rowlers for making ½ cents – spoiled cents – 161 lbs." It appears to me that 202,908 dated 1800 specimens were struck on 16,022 rolled-out Cent planchets and 186,886 Boulton planchets.

I have never seen an 1800 Half Cent on which an undertype could be recognized; however, I have seen specimens which were struck on planchets of low quality copper. These specimens were presumably struck on rolled-out Cent planchets.

1802

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Obverse as in 1800. Reverse changes during year to one that conforms with the Large Cent in that the wreath leaves are broader, the left branch of the wreath ends in a single leaf but the right one ends in a double leaf. There are 16 leaves on the left branch of the wreath and 19 on the right. The number of berries varies from 5 to 6 on each branch through the year 1808. The style of lettering is the same as on the obverse.

DIE PREPARATION The obverse die is an overdate. The 2 is small and cut within the final zero, the outline of which can be seen even on worn specimens. This die differs slightly from the previous 1800 and is definitely another die which was not used in 1800 to my knowledge.

There are two reverse dies: first, the die previously used in 1800, and second, the new style. This die was evidently prepared from a hub which had a stemless wreath, and marks for the letters E in UNITED, STATES, and AMERICA. Also present were marks for the letters HALF CENT and the dividing line of the frac-

tion. The engraver then worked from the center dot and punched in, first, the E's of the legend and, then, the other needed letters, numbers, stems, dividing line of the fraction and berries on the wreath.

PLANCHETS All 1802 Half Cents were struck from planchets made from spoiled Cents, and parts of the design of these coins can be seen on some Half Cents. Correspondence between the Mint and Boulton in 1801 indicated that the Mint was quite short of copper. Boulton had made a few deliveries which were all planchets for Cents. The Half Cent was apparently shoved aside for the more pressing problem of Cent production. Eventually in 1802 the demand for Half Cents was great enough so that it could no longer be ignored. On August 2, 1802, the Treasurer of the Mint delivered 195 lbs. of spoiled Cents for the purpose of making Half Cents. This by weight amounts to 16,250 planchets. On August 14, 8,200 Half Cents were delivered out of these, and, on November 17, 6,166 Half Cents were delivered.

VARIETY #1



(Composite)



Equivalents G-2, E-26

Obverse 1 The overdate

Reverse A The 1800 reverse. Single leaves at end of each branch of wreath.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 7 This die combination is exceedingly rare. It is well known due to the fact it is listed in popular coin catalogues. It is easily identified even in worn condition, which is its usual condition.



Equivalents G-1, E-27

Obverse 1 The overdate.

Reverse B New reverse of the style described in Die Preparation. The diagnostic feature is 6 berries on the right branch of the wreath. This die is the only one in the entire series with a berry to the right of the stem and the lower outside leaf.

Die Breaks Reverse. Gilbert lists slight breaks

from the stem ends toward the final A in AMERICA and U in UNITED. These appear to me to be defects in preparation of the die.

Rarity 3 This is another well publicized coin. It has been known for many years that the 1802 is scarce. Most specimens seen are in less than Fine condition. The reverse, particularly at HALF CENT, is weak.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

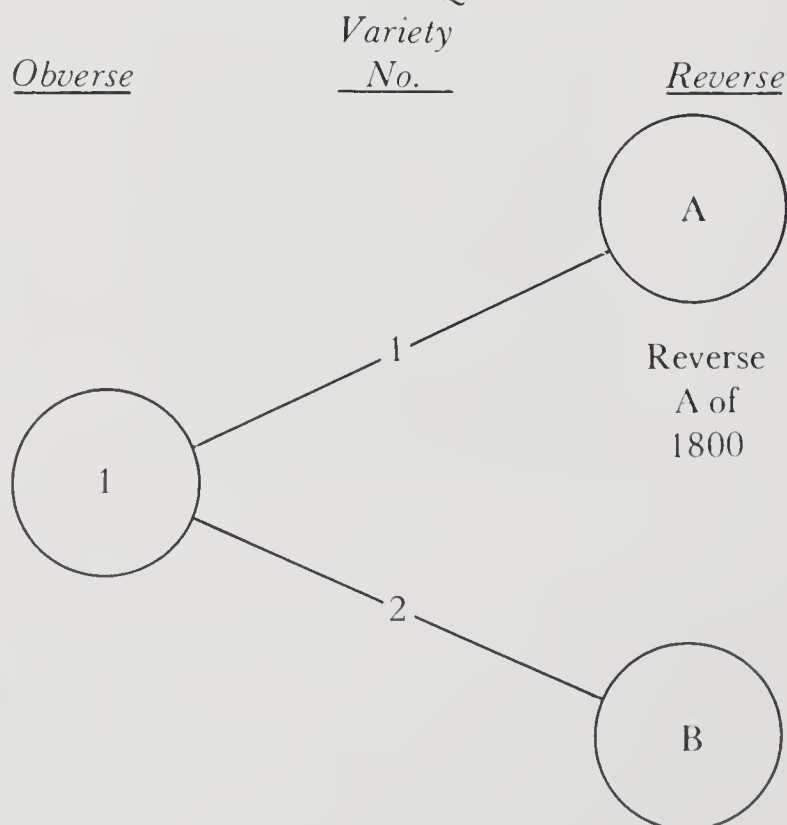
Examine the reverse and classify:

- A. Single leaves at end of each branch of wreath is #1.
- B. Double leaves at end of right branch of wreath is #2.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports 14,366 as the coinage and, judging from its scarceness, I believe this to be the number of coins dated 1802 struck.

1802 EMISSION SEQUENCE



1803

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Both obverse and reverse designs are as previously described. The obverse is the Draped Bust adopted in 1800. The reverse is the Wreath design adopted in 1802. These designs continue through 1808; therefore, there will be no further design descriptions until 1809.

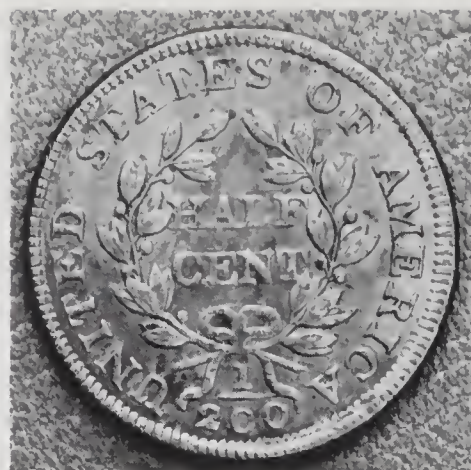
DIE PREPARATION This was discussed for the obverse in the chapter on 1800 and for the reverse in the chapter on 1802. No changes are made in year 1803 - 1808 except as noted in the description of Varieties. There will be no further comment of this until 1809.

PLANCHETS All planchets were supplied by Boulton of England. Invoices in The National Archives indicate the following shipments:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Casks</u>	<u>Net Weight</u>				<u>No. of 84 Grain Planchets</u>
		<u>CWT</u>	<u>QR</u>	<u>Lbs</u>		
July 1803	33	100	- 2	- 6		938,500
August 1803	31	101	- 2	- 7		947,917
September 1804	62	201	- 1	- 0		1,878,333
August 1807	-	100	- 0	- 0		933,333
						<u>4,698,083</u>

The net weights are taken from the invoices. The system of weights was the avoirdupois of 7,-000 grains to the lb. Each QR was 28 lbs. and each CWT, 112 lbs.

The total coinage for the period 1803 through 1811 as reported by the Mint amounted to 4,632,-388, so the source of all planchets through 1811 is apparent. There will be no further comment on planchets until 1825.



Equivalents G-2, E-29

Obverse 1 The letter T in LIBERTY has vestiges of its feet. Apparently the letter punch was broken and the engraver attempted to strengthen this by hand. The 0 and 3 of the date are close when compared to the other known obverse.

Reverse A Five berries on each branch of the wreath. There is a line joining the right end of the fraction dividing line with the right ribbon. This can be seen on all but very worn or corroded specimens. The letter U in UNITED has a reverse comma-like gouge between the tops of the letter.

Die Breaks Reverse. This die develops a crack running from the border at the first T in STATES through the wreath to the border between A and M in AMERICA. Another crack develops from the border at N of UNITED and passes through the wreath and N of CENT. On some specimens this crack joins the first crack to the right of L in HALF.

Rarity 1 One of the two common varieties of 1803; however, this coin is difficult to obtain in higher than Very Fine condition.

VARIETY #2



Equivalents G-4, E-31

Obverse 1 The letter T has smaller vestiges of its feet.

Reverse B Five berries on each branch of the wreath. The letter T in CENT does not have a left foot. The fraction is similar to reverse A but there is no line joining the dividing line to the right ribbon and there is no defect in U of UNITED.

Die Breaks Reverse. A line crack develops from the first S in STATES touching the tops of the letters through C in AMERICA and reaches the border below the right ribbon. The border above STAT later chips away leaving a large mass of metal above those letters.

Rarity 5 This coin is seldom seen in condition higher than Fine but, as most persons do not attribute their 1803's, it can be found.

VARIETY #3



(First Use)



(Second Use)

**Equivalents** G-3, E-30

Obverse 2 The 0 and 3 are widely separated, when compared to the previous variety. It usually has clash marks which are caused by the dies coming together without a planchet. These clash marks are seen on both sides of the figure of Liberty and are the reverse impression of the wreath. The die was then apparently removed to be repaired and rehardened. It then reappears this time with a bulge at the 18 of the date and traces of the clash marks in the fields. I believe that the bulge is caused by the hardening process as similar die imperfections appear at this time on 1804 dies.

Reverse C Five berries on each branch of the wreath. The diagnostic feature of the reverse is the right foot of F in HALF which is missing. The zeros of the denominator almost touch. I have

heard it referred to as the “Cross-eyed Zero” reverse.

Die Breaks Obverse. This die develops a crack from the B in LIBERTY to the hair. The upper and lower curves of the 3 are joined and finally the die breaks at the bulge at 18, which is a rare die state.

Reverse. A crack develops from the second T in STATES through F in HALF and reaches the border between M and E of AMERICA.

Rarity 1 One of the two common 1803 dated coins, it is scarce with perfect dies (first use), and quite common with the cracked reverse die (second use). It is my opinion that the second use specimens were struck in 1804 as the reverse die is used in an earlier state of deterioration with two 1804 obverses.

VARIETY #4

**Equivalents** G-1, E-28

Obverse 1 The T in LIBERTY is now completely devoid of its feet. I believe this to be an 1805 strike as it is combined with an 1805 style reverse. Thus I believe that this die was put aside for awhile and used only due to the necessity for an obverse die in 1805.

Reverse D This is easily identified as the left branch of the wreath has six berries. The extra berry is on the outside of the wreath below the first T in STATES. The fraction and the letters E of the legend are also at the style of 1805. Early in

this striking, clash marks develop on the reverse. The outline of the hair knot of the obverse can be seen between the H of HALF and the C of CENT. Apparently this was noticed at the Mint and the obverse or reverse die rotated 180°. Some specimens seen have a die rotated so that the reverse is upside down when turned as a coin should be.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 4 The same comment applies on this coin as I have made on Variety #2; however, it has been my experience that it is not as scarce.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

The 1803's classify themselves by examining the reverses.

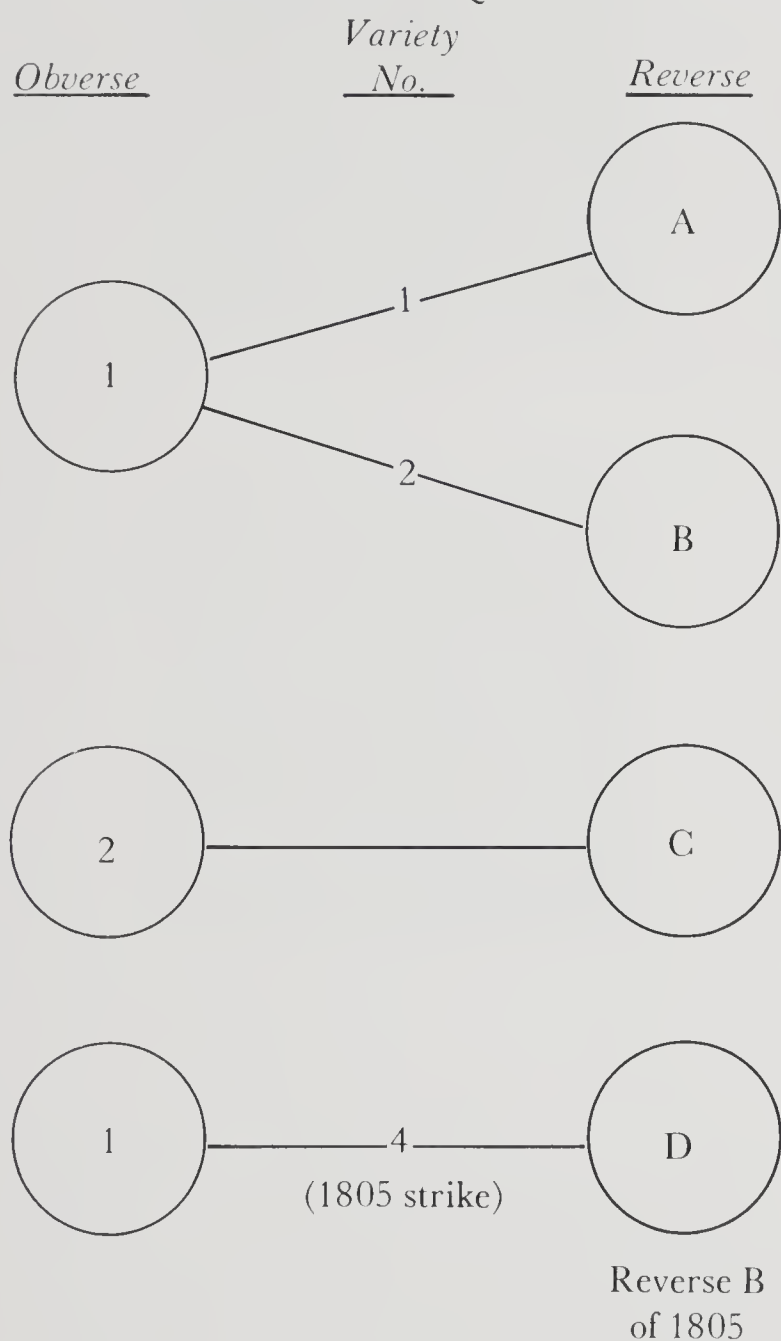
- A. Large fraction with line from dividing line to right ribbon, obverse, close 0 and 3 is #1.
- B. Zeros of fraction almost touch - obverse wide 0 and 3 with bulge at 18 (usually) is #3.
- C. If none of the above apply, count the berries on the left branch of the wreath; if there are six,

the obverse should have the close 0 and 3 and is #4.

- D. If there are five berries, examine the T in CENT; if the left foot is missing and the obverse is the close 0 and 3, it is #2; however, examine the U in UNITED, as on worn #1's, the line from the dividing line of the fraction to the right ribbon is sometimes faint.

1803

EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports a coinage of 97,900 for this calendar year. In view of the large number of surviving specimens, this amount is obviously not the number of coins struck with an 1803 date. As stated previously I believe that 1803 dated coins were minted in 1804 and 1805. I have not found any records which would indicate the number of dated 1803's struck. I feel that there probably is no record, and again, the lack of concern by the Mint for the Half Cent leaves an enigma for the present day numismatist.

1804

VARIETY #1



(First Use)



(Second Use)



Equivalents G-6, E-37

Obverse 1 A large 4 with a vertical crosslet at the end of the horizontal line of the numeral. This numeral has been placed in the die much higher than the 180 so that it touches the bust.

Reverse A This is reverse C of 1803. I have determined the following order of obverse dies for this reverse by closely examining this die, and it appears to me that this is the order of obverse dies:

1. Obverse 2 of 1803 (first use)
2. Obverse 1 of 1804 (first use)
3. Obverse 2 of 1804 (first and only use)

4. Obverse 2 of 1803 (second use)
5. Obverse 1 of 1804 (second use)

Thus this variety comes with a perfect reverse die (first use) and with the reverse badly cracked (second use). (See Emission Sequence)

Die Breaks Reverse. None except as noted on Variety #3 of 1803. In the second use of this die combination, the die is so badly cracked that the letters to the right of the crack are very faint even on Fine specimens.

Rarity 4 Both first use and second use states of the reverse die are of equal scarceness. Most specimens are worn. Specimens in Very Fine or higher condition are extremely rare.

VARIETY #2



(Specimen from the
collection of
Ray Munde)



Equivalents None. Not in Gilbert nor Empire.

Obverse 2 The diagnostic feature is the crosslet 4, which is below the bottom arc line of the 180 and tilted to the left. Known to Half Cent collectors as the "Low 4".

Reverse A The cross-eyed zeros.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 8 This variety was discovered by Howard Hazelcorn in the late 1960's, and is a muling of obverse of Gilbert No. 10 with the reverse of Gilbert No. 6. At this writing there are two specimens known, both of which are in worn condition.

VARIETY #3



(Composite)



Equivalents Not in Gilbert, E-43

Obverse 1 The high 4 touching the bust.

Reverse B The outstanding feature of this die is the numerator of the fraction. The top of the 1 is the same distance from the knot as the bottom is from the dividing line of the fraction. Known as the "Equi-distant Numerator".

Die Breaks On the single specimen known, there are faint cracks on the reverse which are more fully described at Variety #4.

Rarity 8 Discovered by Walter Breen in 1953. The only known specimen is in worn condition. This variety is a muling of the obverse of Gilbert No. 6 with the reverse of Gilbert No. 10. The only difference between this variety and Variety #5 is the absence of the Spiked Chin. I have noticed that on some worn examples of the Spiked Chin obverse the Spiked Chin is sometimes very difficult to see, but the die defect between the lips is always present.



Equivalents G-10, E-41

Obverse 2 The low 4

Reverse B The Equi-distant Numerator

Die Breaks Reverse. Gilbert describes many cracks for this die which I have seen only on Variety #5. In my observations, this die is seen with a small crack starting at the 2 of the denominator and passing through the left ribbon



and terminating at the U of UNITED. Another crack connects the bottoms of STATES and OF. As most known specimens of this variety are quite worn, these die cracks are usually difficult to see.

Rarity 6 Seldom seen except in worn condition, it can be found if one examines all 1804's with crosslet 4 and stems offered for sale.

VARIETY #5



Equivalents G-11, E-42

Obverse 1a The Spiked Chin. This is obverse 1 now damaged by having a triangular protrusion from the chin of the head of Liberty. There is another protrusion between the lips (Liberty is sticking out her tongue?). There is a large semi-circular bulge at the border to the right of Liberty's face and also a number of scrape-like marks in the field to the right of Liberty's neck. I have no satisfactory explanation other than the guess that the die received these injuries during a rehardening process, which seems to have worked as this obverse continues through four more reverses.

Reverse B The Equi-distant Numerator

Die Breaks Obverse. Thin cracks develop connecting some letters of the word LIBERTY.

Reverse. A large irregular shaped crack develops during this die combination, and runs the length of the die from A in STATES



through the wreath to the border above C in AMERICA. The cracks which were described for #4 become more prominent and the first crack extends from the U through the N in UNITED. This crack also extends at its other end from the 2 of the denominator to the border. The light crack connecting the bottoms of STATES and OF becomes more prominent and extends from D of UNITED to the first A in AMERICA. On worn specimens, only parts of the cracks described above can be seen. There is noticeable die sinking to the right of the second T of STATES. This results in ES of STATES and the word OF being faint on many Fine or higher specimens.

Rarity 5 This coin usually has its rarity exaggerated. I have seen as many as four in a dealer's stock at one time. In conditions above Very Fine, this coin is quite scarce, but it can usually be found by examining the reverses of Spiked Chin 1804's.

VARIETY #6



(Early die state)



(Intermediate die state)



(Final die state)

Equivalents G-8, E-39

Obverse 1a The spiked chin.

Reverse C The final A in AMERICA is distant from the right ribbon. All letter T's have vestigial feet which were apparently hand-cut into the die. This die is usually seen in a damaged condition which will be described.

Die Breaks Obverse. Line cracks connecting the top letters of LIBE become more prominent.

Reverse. A line crack develops from O in OF to the border between A and M. Another crack develops one denticle below and runs across the

top of MERICA, joining the border below the right ribbon. A third crack develops below the final zero of the denominator and runs along the tops of the letters to E in STATES. As the use of this die continues, various portions of the rim chip away resulting in large masses of metal which make this reverse very easy to identify. Gilbert listed eight different die states of this reverse, which will not be repeated here; however, a collection showing the deterioration of this die is very interesting and can be done with relative ease.

Rarity 2 Common, particularly in lower grades of condition, but scarcer than Variety #8.

VARIETY #7



Equivalents G-9, E-40

Obverse 1a The spiked chin.

Reverse D The right point of the triple leaf on the right branch of the wreath is half way between the O and F, which are widely separated when compared to the other 1804 reverses. The left foot of the first T in STATES is missing and the right foot is present. This is the only stemmed 1804 reverse with this feature.



Die Breaks Obverse. Always seen with line cracks through LIBERTY.

Reverse. The rim first chips away at OF A and later extends from the second T of STATES to I in AMERICA. This die break was unknown to Gilbert and discovered by F. R. Alvord. The sale of Alvord's collection in 1924 had a specimen with the latest known state of this break (Lot 113).

Rarity 6 Most specimens known are in worn condition.

VARIETY #8



Equivalents G-7, E-38

Obverse 1a The spiked chin.

Reverse E Very similar to reverse C but the final A in AMERICA almost joins the right ribbon. In classifying reverses of spiked chin 1804's, check the final A in AMERICA as this is the only spiked chin reverse with this feature. A die defect in the form of a ridge connects the top of the R in AMERICA to the border; however, in this

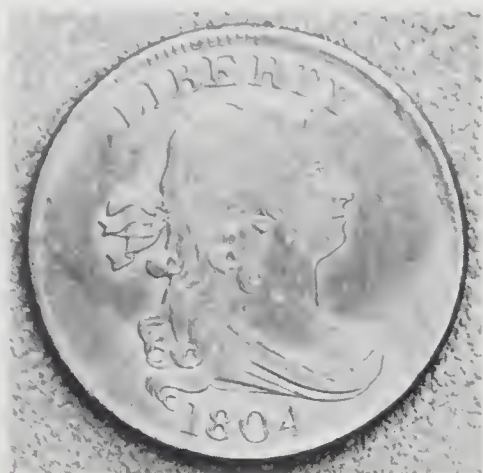


striking it is sometimes faint and, on worn specimens, cannot be seen.

Die Breaks Obverse. The line cracks in LIBERTY extend through the tops of all the letters and finally chip out over LIBE, which caused the die to be discarded. This was a particularly tough die which lasted through five different reverses but at last is rendered "Hors de combat".

Rarity 1 By far the most common spiked chin and third most common 1804.

VARIETY #9



Equivalents G-5, E-36

Obverse 3 A large crosslet 4, leaning to the left but distant from O of the date, to distinguish it from obverse 2.

Reverse E The ridge from the top of the R in AMERICA is more prominent.



Die Breaks Obverse. Seldom seen without a border break at RTY of LIBERTY. On Very Fine or higher specimens, faint cracks can be seen in the date and LIBERTY.

Rarity 2 Second most common crosslet 4, with stems, without the spiked chin. The perfect obverse die is scarce in comparison to the broken die.

VARIETY #10



Equivalents G-4, E-35

Obverse 4 Large crosslet 4 straight up. Higher than 0 and almost touching the bust and the 0. Seen with irregular defects in the field below the knot in the hair.

Reverse E The ridge connecting R in AMERICA to the border is so large that it merges with the letter.

Die Breaks None known. Examples of this



striking are seen with both obverse and reverse dies rusted.

Rarity 1 The most common crosslet 4, with stems, without spiked chin, and second most common 1804. The rusted dies indicate that the dies were unused for awhile. It is known that the Mint closed for a period in 1804 due to yellow fever. It could be that these dies were improperly stored, at which time the rust developed.



Equivalents G-1, E-32

Obverse 5 "The Plain 4". This die is the only 1804 which lacks the vertical crosslet on the 4.

Reverse F This reverse is different from any of the preceding ones as all the letters are perfectly formed and there are six berries on the left branch of the wreath. The stem ends are short and not uniform.

Die Breaks Reverse. This die bulges to the lower right of the center. On worn specimens, ALF and ENT and part of the right branch of the wreath cannot be seen.

Rarity 4 A well-known variety as it is the only plain 4 with stems. Very scarce in condition higher than Very Fine; however, in lower grades it is only fairly scarce. The failure of the reverse die must have occurred early in its life judging from this variety's scarceness. It should be noted that both the obverse and reverse dies are used for the first time in this striking. I believe this is the first coin to be minted from a second press which will continue to coin Half Cents through 1806. (See Emission Sequence.)

VARIETY #12



Equivalents G-3, E-34

Obverse 4 Crosslet 4 previously used to coin Variety #10.

Reverse G The stemless wreath. This reverse can be identified at once due to the lack of stems between the ribbons and the branches of the wreath. Apparently the engraver neglected to cut them. The left branch of the wreath has six berries. All berries on this reverse are very prominent. There is a flaw in the die from the fourth

outside leaf of the left branch of the wreath through the letter E in UNITED, where it terminates at the upper vertical of the middle horizontal of that letter. This flaw gets larger as the die is used on 1804 dated specimens.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 2 Another well-known variety, the crosslet 4, without stems. This coin is only scarce in Extremely Fine or higher condition.

VARIETY #13



Equivalents G-2, E-33

Obverse 5 The plain 4. This die is sometimes rusted.

Reverse G The stemless wreath. In this striking the flaw mentioned in the last variety is more prominent, but it takes at least a Fine specimen to locate it.



Die Breaks Obverse. A long thin crack develops in the field of the obverse to the left of the head of Liberty.

Rarity 1 The plain 4, without stems. The most common 1804 Half Cent in all conditions. It has been my experience that one out of every four 1804 Half Cents is of this variety.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

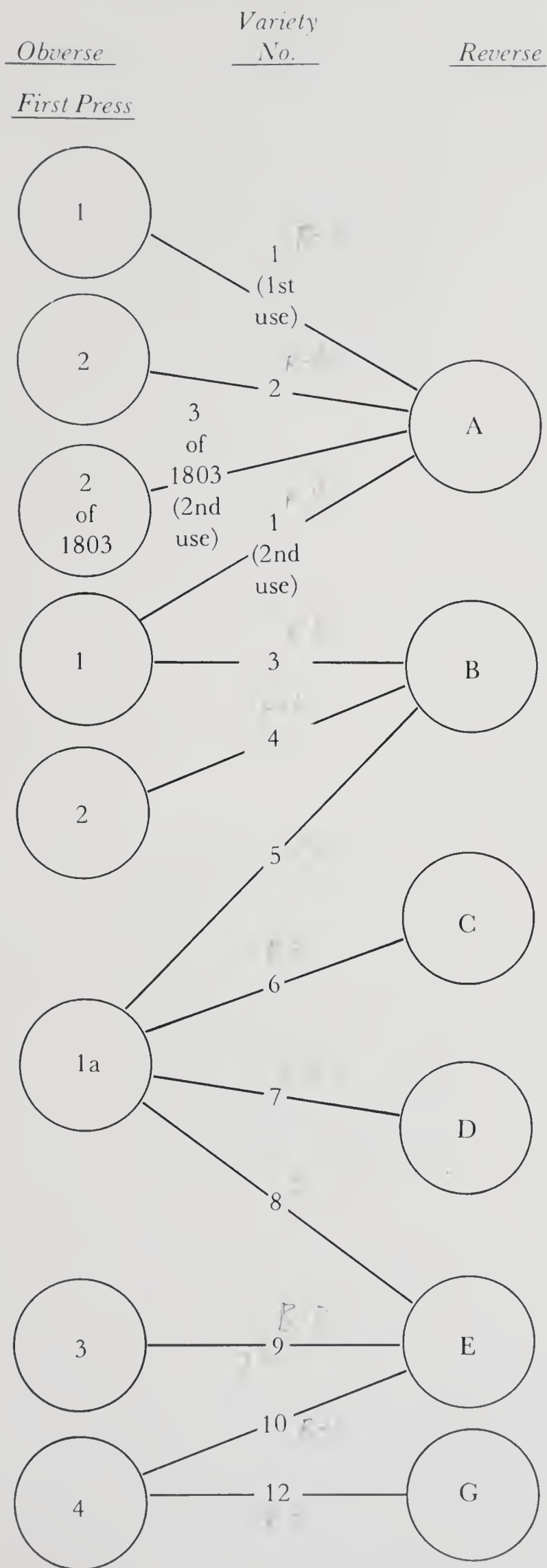
- A. Plain 4. Examine reverse. Stems to wreath is #11. Without stems to wreath is #13.
- B. Crosslet 4. With spiked chin. Examine reverse. Final A in AMERICA almost touches ribbon is #8.
Right point of triple leaf between O and F is #7.
Equi-distant Numerator in fraction is #5.
If none of the above apply, it should be #6.
- C. Crosslet 4. Without spiked chin. A further

look at the position of the 4 is necessary.

- a. High 4 touching bust. Examine reverse. Zeros of fraction almost touch is #1. Equi-distant Numerator in fraction is #3.
- b. High 4 not touching bust. Examine reverse. Stemless wreath is #12. Stems to wreath is #10.
- c. Low 4 distant from 0 is #9.
- d. Low 4 close to 0. Examine reverse. Equi-distant Numerator in fraction is #4. Zeros of fraction almost touch is #2.

1804

EMISSION SEQUENCE



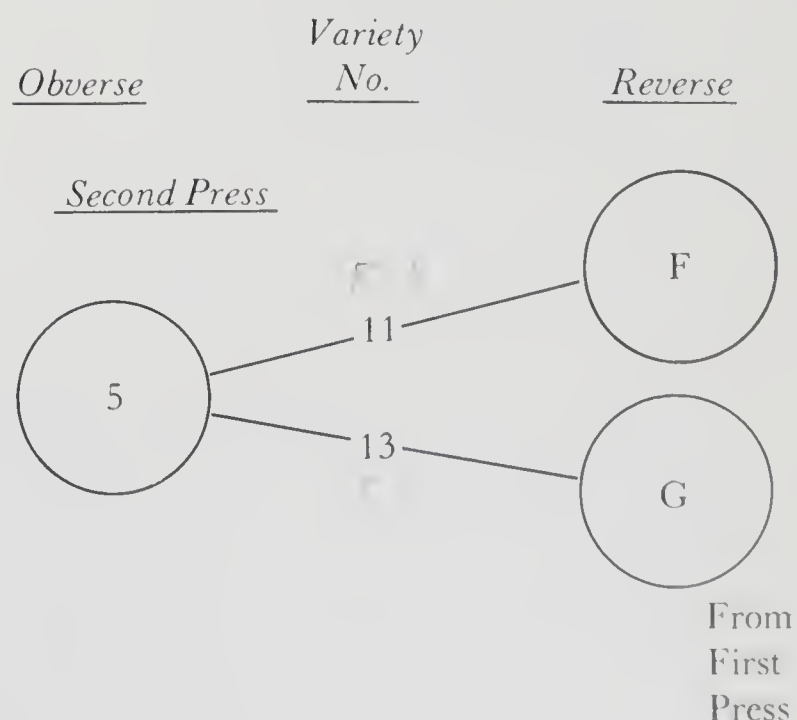
GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports a coinage of 1,055,312 Half Cents for the calendar year. It undoubtedly includes some 1803 dated specimens, and I believe some 1804 dated specimens are included in the 1805 calendar year total. In the year 1804 the Mint coined more Half Cents than Cents. This was probably not due to an unusual demand for the "Little Half Sisters", but a matter of expediency. Correspondence with Boulton in England indicates that the price of copper had risen, and, while there was one shipment of planchets for Cents and Half Cents, the scarceness of the 1804 Cent indicates that once the Cent planchets were used up, the copper coinage was concentrated on Half Cents until more Cent planchets were received. The Mint had received approximately 1,900,000 Half Cent planchets in 1803, and a similar amount in the fall of 1804, so there was a plentiful supply on hand.

To Half Cent collectors, the 1804 dated specimens are a real challenge and there are enough scarce and rare varieties so that one never stops looking at any 1804 offered.

1804

EMISSION SEQUENCE



1805

VARIETY #1

**Equivalents** G-1, E-44

Obverse 1 A small unusually shaped 5, which does not touch the bust. On most specimens a small line may be seen above the upper stroke of the 5. In all other respects this die conforms to those used beginning with 1800.

Reverse A The stemless wreath. This is the same die which was used in 1804. On some higher conditioned coins, rust pits can be seen. The die flaw between E in UNITED and the wreath starts to disappear as the die wears, so that ear-

lier strikes will have the feature just as it is on Variety #13 of 1804.

Die Breaks Reverse. During this year a slight rim crumbling occurs between the right ribbon end and the final A in AMERICA. To see this, a coin must be in Very Fine or higher condition. Gilbert notes a crack from U in UNITED to the border. I have never seen an example of this.

Rarity 1 By far the most common 1805 and easily available in all conditions except Uncirculated.

VARIETY #2

**Equivalents** G-4, E-47

Obverse 2 An extremely small 5 on which the upper stroke is more horizontal than the previous obverse. The vertical line of the 5 is also shorter and thicker.

Reverse B the same die which was described for 1803, Variety #4. All letters are perfectly formed and the E's of the legend are smaller than the previous ones. The wreath has six berries on the left branch.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 7 This is a particularly elusive coin. As

no die breaks are known, just why the reverse die was discarded is unknown. Most specimens are in worn condition with the reverse particularly faint at HALF CENT. I believe that this coin was minted on the press referred to as the first press in 1804 which, I assume, was first used in 1805 to coin Cents. When the Mint ran out of Cent planchets, this press was changed back to Half Cents. Based on this, it follows that 1803, Variety #4, was the first coin minted on the first press in 1805, and was followed by this variety. (See Emission Sequence and General Comments.)

VARIETY #3



Equivalents G-3, E-46

Obverse 2 In this striking the field to the right of the head of Liberty has a very large bulge. I can only guess that this was due to an attempt to re-harden the die.

Reverse C This die has six berries on the left branch and small E's in the legend. In the denominator of the fraction, the 2 is distant from the

zeros. There is a small flaw running from the lower part of the final A in AMERICA almost to, but not touching, the right ribbon.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 6 The second scarce 1805, both of which are mentioned in popular coin catalogues as the Small 5 with Stems and priced in accordance with their scarceness.

VARIETY #4



Equivalents G-2, E-45

Obverse 3 A large 5 when compared to the previous 5's. The numeral is small when compared to the 180. The upper stroke of the 5 touches the bust.

Reverse C In this striking, often seen with clash marks of the obverse die between the wreath and H of HALF and C of CENT and F in HALF.

Die Breaks Obverse. The die develops a crack from the top of the 1, which runs diagonally to the

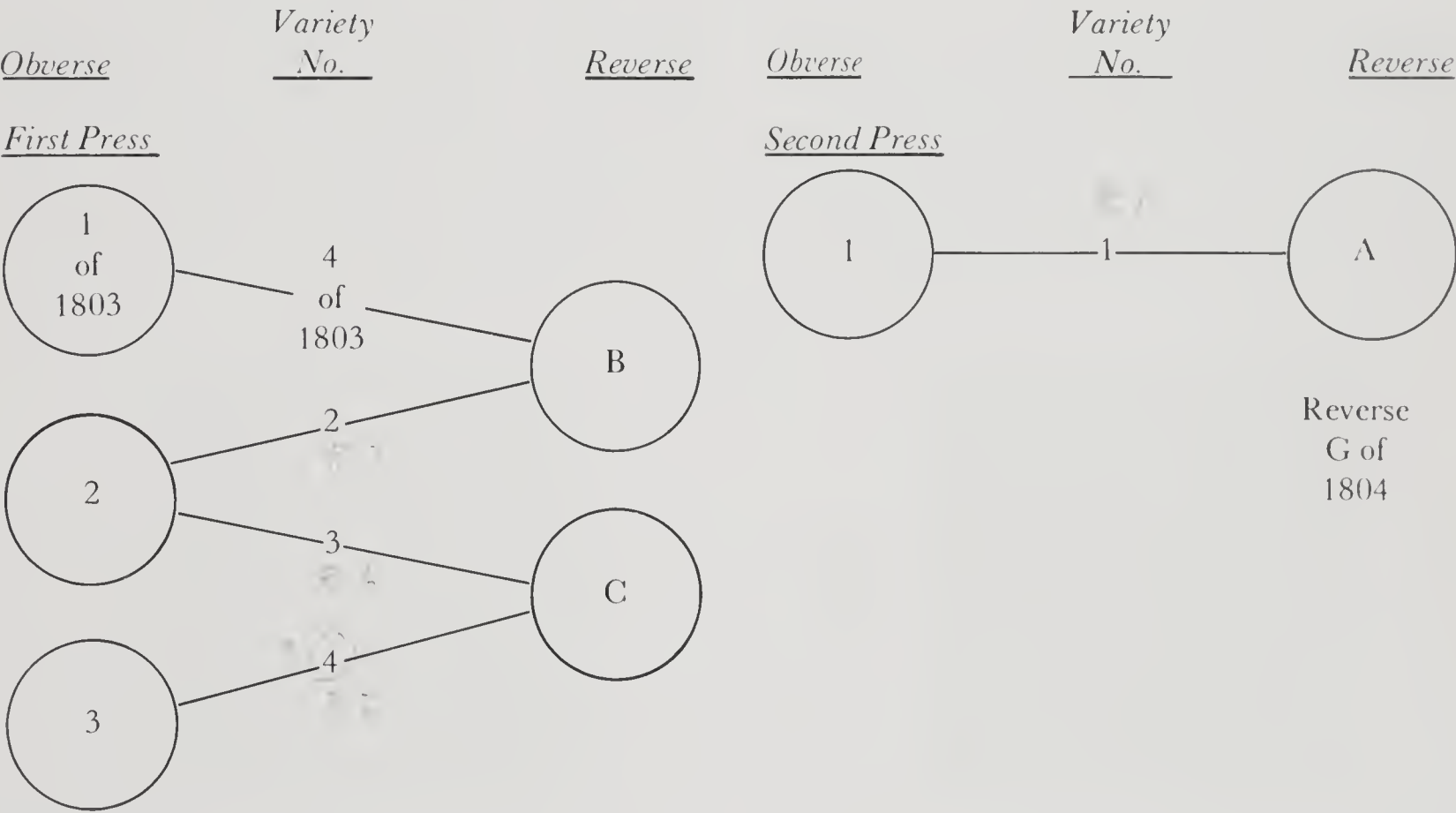
lower loop of the 8. This crack can be seen even on worn specimens. Other small line cracks develop in the same area, and another line crack runs from the left of LIBERTY through that word, and ends below the right branch of Y. There are other imperfections in the die of a similar nature, which require a specimen of at least Extremely Fine condition to see.

Rarity 2 Not quite as common as Variety #1. Usually available in all conditions except Uncirculated.

- Examine reverse and classify:
- A. Stemless wreath is #1; obverse should be as described.
 - B. Stems to wreath.
 - a. Right foot of T in CENT is present and touches leaf. Obverse should be small 5. This is #2.
 - b. Right foot of T in CENT is covered by leaf. Examine obverse. If 5 touches bust, it is #4. If 5 does not touch bust, it is #3.

1805

EMISSION SEQUENCE



Coinage for this calendar year is 814,464 which probably includes many of Variety #13 of 1804. The total is only slightly below the Cent coinage of 941,116. Again I am of the opinion that the large number of Half Cents minted was due to a shortage of Cent planchets and not due to a demand for the Half Cent. By the end of 1805 only about half of the Half Cent planchets from Boulton in England had been used. No further shipments were received until 1807.

My placing of an 1803 dated coin in coinage for this year will probably raise some numismatic eyebrows, but to me it is the solution to the enigma of the same reverse die being used with obverses dated two years apart. The apparent answer would be that the reverse die was used in the earlier year and merely saved to be used again, but I disagree for a number of reasons. The most important one to me is the style of the reverse. The left branch of the wreath has six berries, instead of five. The E's in the legend are smaller than any

used in 1803 and 1804. The letter T in the legend has its feet, which does not occur on the other 1803's and the majority of 1804's. Due to these reasons I believe that the die saved was the 1803 obverse. It should be noted that this is the last use of this die. I believe that in 1805, when the Mint exhausted its supply of Cent planchets, the coining press which had been used for Cents was changed to Half Cents. There was a plentiful supply of Half Cent planchets on hand. The other press was turning out 1805 dated Half Cents, so the engraver started to make another 1805 obverse die, the reverse die having been previously made to replace the stemless wreath die then being used in the second press. Since the engraver had not finished the 1805 obverse, the 1803 obverse was put in the press, together with the extra reverse which had been prepared. The reasoning here is strictly mine and if it is wrong, only I am accountable. However, I have studied this question for a number of years and am reasonably sure that this is the explanation.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-48

Obverse 1 The small high 6. The bottom of the 6 is well above the bottom of the 0. The figure does not touch the drapery (contrary to Gilbert's description). Clash marks have been reported on some specimens.

Reverse A The stemless wreath. This is the same die which was used for 1804 and 1805 dated coins. This die must have stayed in the same press and lasted far beyond its expected life. In this year the die appears, on Uncirculated specimens, to have rust pits over its entire surface. The flaw from E in UNITED to the wreath has almost



completely disappeared due to die wear. The reverse is rotated on some specimens.

Die Breaks Reverse. The rim crumbling mentioned in 1805 extends, during the die's use, from the final zero of the denominator to R in AMERICA.

Rarity 1 A common coin in all conditions except Uncirculated. Gilbert reported that on some specimens the 6 of the date and the entire wreath on the reverse are double cut. I have seen a specimen which exhibited these features but, after close examination, it appeared to me that the coin was a double strike.

VARIETY #2



Equivalents G-2, E-50.

Obverse 2 The small 6. The bottom of the 6 is not quite even with the bottom arc line of the 180. The top of the 6 is more distant from the bust than on the prior obverse. I have trouble telling these two dies apart. Since one combination with obverse 1 is very rare, I have developed another point of reference. On obverse 1, the bottom of B in LIBERTY is considerably below the bottom of the letter E. On obverse 2, the bottom line of the B is above the E.

Reverse B Stems to wreath, six berries on left branch, and small E's. The denominator of the fraction is from a new style punch. The numerals



are smaller than on previous dies and are widely spaced. The R and I in AMERICA touch at their bases, which does not occur on the other stemmed wreath reverse die of this year.

Die Breaks Obverse. A thin irregular crack develops from the rim below the zero of the date to the bust of Liberty. This crack passes through the bottom of the 6.

Rarity 5 Another well-publicized coin which is seldom seen in higher than Fine condition.

It is my opinion that this coin was struck on the first press which had previously coined Variety #4 of 1805. When Cent planchets became available again, Half Cent coinage ceased from this press.

VARIETY #3



Equivalents Not in Gilbert, E-49

Obverse 1 The small high 6.

Reverse B Stems to wreath.

Die Breaks Reverse. Some specimens have a rim break at ICA of AMERICA.



Rarity 7 This variety was first mentioned when the Neil collection was sold in 1947. The specimen was purchased by J. L. Brobston who properly identified it as a muling of the obverse of Gilbert No. 1 with the reverse of Gilbert No. 2.

VARIETY #4



Equivalents G-3, E-51

Obverse 3 A large 6 which merges into the bust drapery.

Reverse C Stems to wreath but now with five berries on the left branch of the wreath. (All future Draped Bust reverses have five berries.) R and I in AMERICA do not touch at their bases. Fraction is similar to reverse B. The dividing line of the fraction is long and the right end is thinner



than the center and left end. This die is often seen with parts of the wreath faintly struck even on Uncirculated specimens.

Die Breaks Obverse. Reported by Gilbert to have a break from border to border through ERTY. I have never seen this.

Rarity 1 Very common in all conditions including Uncirculated.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

A. Large 6 merging into bust is #4.

B. Small 6. Examine reverse.

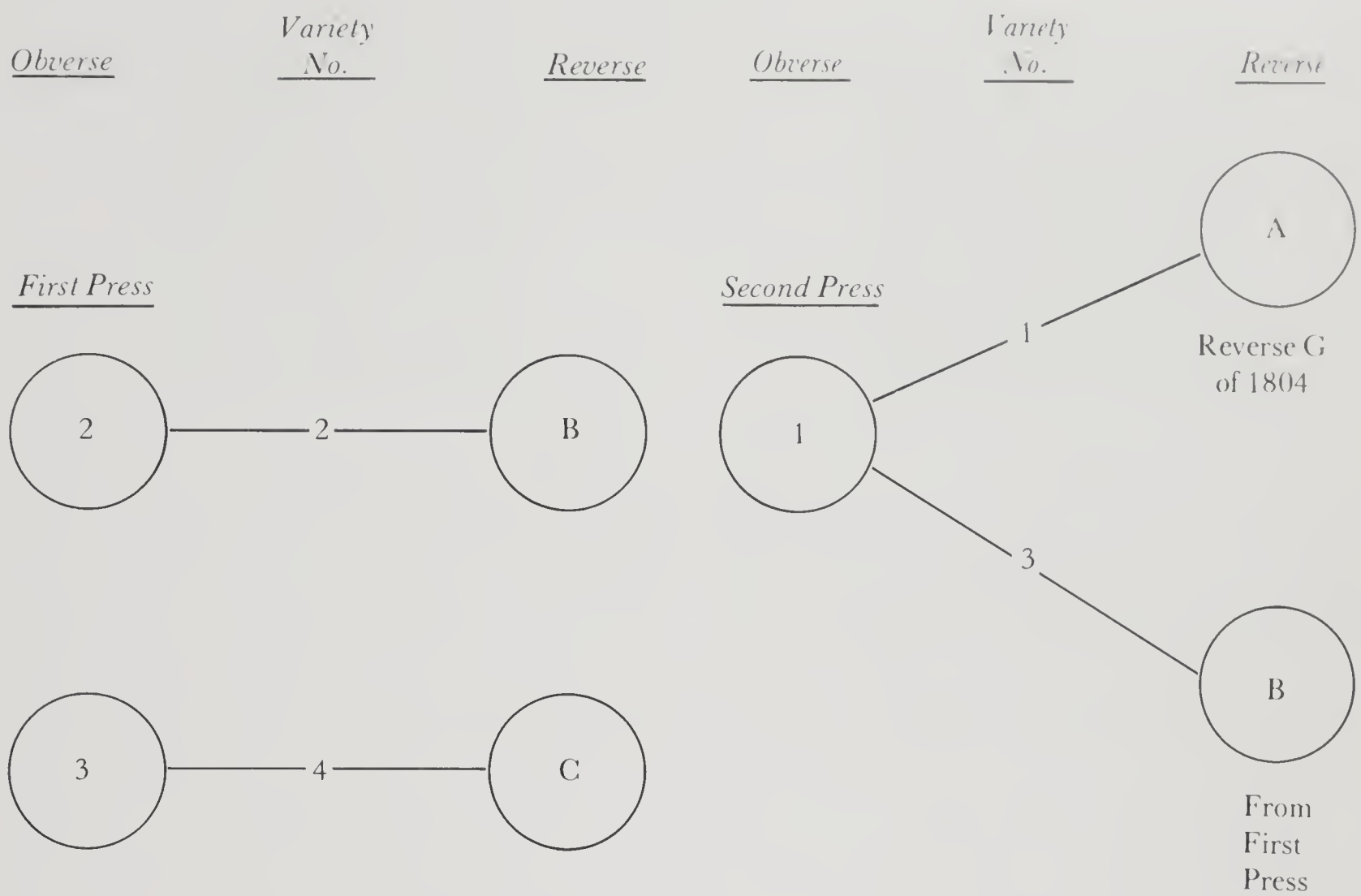
a. Stemless wreath is #1.

b. Stems to wreath. Examine obverse again.

(a) High B in LIBERTY is #2.

(b) Low B in LIBERTY is #3.

EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the calendar year is 356,000 which does not seem to be the proper ratio of surviving specimens. Apparently some 1806 dated specimens were struck in 1807.

Cent coinage for the year 1806 is reported as 348,000 and again I feel sure some of the coinage of Half Cents was undertaken solely to keep the employees busy due to a shortage of Cent planchets. It has also been stated that the coining press for Cents was out of repair during a large part of the year.

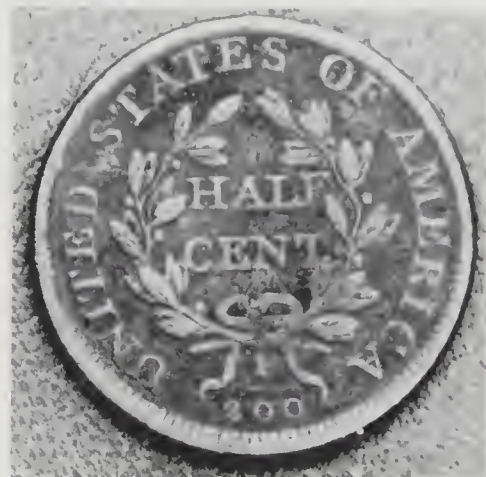
1807

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-52

Obverse 1 The only known 1807 obverse. The T in LIBERTY is lacking its left foot. At some time during the life of this die it became rusted and apparently was rehardened, which causes the denticles to become very faint and the fields on each side of the head of Liberty to have pronounced bulges which extend vertically on both sides of the bust.



Reverse A Reverse C of 1806.

Die Breaks Obverse. Gilbert reports a border break over TY in LIBERTY. Another break has been mentioned as occurring at LI. I have not seen either of these.

Rarity 2 Usually available in all conditions except Uncirculated.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the calendar year as reported, 476,000 which undoubtedly includes some 1806 dated specimens.

In the year 1807 the design of the Half Dollar and Half Eagle were changed to the "Classic" or "Turban Head" design by John Reich. In 1808 the remaining denominations coined that year were changed except for the "Little Half Sisters". Again I feel that the Mint had more pressing problems so the adoption of this design by the Half Cent waited. The Mint also presumably had an 1807 obverse die which had never been used.

There was probably a plentiful supply of Half Cents resting in kegs waiting to be shipped when the demand arose. In addition, the Mint had received another shipment of planchets from Boulton in England which, when added to those left from the 1804 shipment, totaled about 1,900,000 uncoined planchets. In 1808 the decision to coin Half Cents must have been a rather hasty one, probably due to a shortage of Cent planchets. The unused 1807 obverse was altered to 1808 and a reverse gotten up in a hurry. This will be covered in the next chapter.



Equivalents Not in Gilbert, E-53

Obverse 1 The 8 over 7 obverse. The upper loop of the final 8 has a flat top and a small spur at the left end. The numeral 8 on this obverse, as well as obverse 2, is of a new style in that it is not as high and is wider. The same punch was evidently used for both 8's of the date. The final 8 appears to be cut over a 7.

Reverse A "The sloppy reverse". The arrangement of the letters in the legend is quite uneven. The main feature of this die is the leaf which is immediately below the upright of the D in UNITED.

Die Breaks Reverse. Large heavy crack from border over N in UNITED through the top of these letters to denticle between D of UNITED

and S of STATES. Second heavy crack from next denticle to S in STATES and through the tops of these letters where it ends at the E of STATES. This crack thins after the letter A. This break undoubtedly occurred due to the fact that the dies were not exactly parallel in the coining press. The weaker reverse die broke very quickly. Judging from the rarity of this striking, I doubt that it lasted for 100 coins.

Rarity 8 Discovered in 1952 by the author among a handful of worn and battered coins. Since the announcement of its discovery in December 1953, two more specimens have been found of which I am aware, both of which are in low grades of condition.

VARIETY #2



Equivalents G-1, E-54

Obverse 1 The 8 over 7

Reverse B There is a die flaw connecting the right stem end to the right foot of the final A in AMERICA. This can be seen even on worn specimens. The fifth outside leaf of the left branch ends between the letters E and D of UNITED. On the other reverse die, this leaf is directly under the upright of D.

Die Breaks Obverse. The rim chips out and

connects with TY of LIBERTY. Another part of this crack develops which joins the tops of the letters BERT. Gilbert lists this break as rare and I have seen it a few times.

Rarity 3 Decidedly scarcer than the following variety, but its rarity is often exaggerated. It can be occasionally picked up as a regular 1808 despite its mention in popular coin catalogues. In any condition higher than Fine, it is decidedly rare.



Equivalents G-2, E-55

Obverse 2 The "Normal 1808"; however, the final 8 appears to be made by punching two zeros from the reverse fraction punch. To me this is another indication of the low regard the Mint had for the "Little Half Sisters" of the Cent. This die is seen with rust pits in the field. The T in LIBERTY has defective feet.

Reverse B The die flaw appears weaker, probably due to wear of the die. Many of the speci-

mens of this striking have the reverse rotated 180°.

Die Breaks Reverse. A small crack develops from the second inside leaf of the left branch of the wreath of the stem of the berry above it. It takes an Extremely Fine or higher specimen to see this. Gilbert reports a faint crack from the border through I in UNITED to wreath. I have never seen an example of this crack.

Rarity 1 Decidedly common in all conditions except Uncirculated.

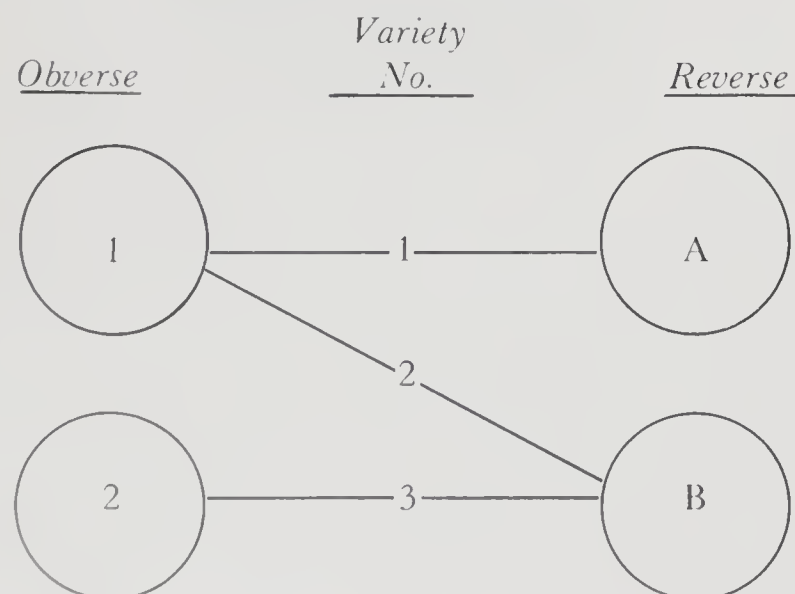
KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

- A. Large high final 8 is #3.
- B. Small 8 - Examine reverse.
 - a. Fifth outside leaf of left branch of wreath ends between E and D of UNITED is #2.
 - b. If leaf ends under upright of D, it is #1.

1808

EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the calendar year, 400,000; however, it was not many of the approximately 1,900,000 planchets which were on hand at the beginning of the year. I think that the officials of the Mint were concerned about this large accumulation so, in 1809, efforts appear to have been made to eliminate this situation.

Gilbert lists a third variety of this date. I have seen only a photograph of this coin, which is in worn condition. I believe the coin is an example of Variety #3 which has been damaged or altered. Perhaps it is another variety. In that case it would fit into the emission sequence as #4.

1809

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Both obverse and reverse designs are changed. The obverse is the “Classic” or “Turban Head” design by John Reich. The reverse is a reduced version of the Cent design adopted in 1808. On the obverse, Liberty is facing left and is wearing a hair band with the word LIBERTY. There are seven stars to the left of the bust of Liberty and six stars to the right. The date is below the bust.

The reverse is a continuous wreath tied with a ribbon. The words UNITED STATES OF AMERICA surround the wreath. The words

HALF CENT and a dash are within the wreath. The fraction 1/200 has been eliminated.

DIE PREPARATION Obverse. A hub was used to punch in the head. The engraver then punched in the stars and numerals of the date. There is a center dot below Liberty’s ear.

Reverse. A hub was used in this year. The hub had the wreath, the words HALF CENT and the dash. The engraver punched in the legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

There will be no further comment on Design Description or Die Preparation until 1825.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents Not in Gilbert, E-58

Obverse 1 The curl of the bust of Liberty is over the space between the zero and 9 of the date. As there are three other dies of this date which also exhibit this feature, this die is sometimes difficult to identify. The 1 and 8 are close. The zero is high and not double cut. The zero and 9 are close. On specimens in Very Good or higher condition, the upper left star should be examined. The two left points will show evidence of being recut.

Reverse A The high leaf of the wreath is below the final S of STATES. The point of this leaf *does not* extend beyond the S. There is a berry in the

wreath below the tail of R in AMERICA. On higher condition specimens upper and lower arcs are seen between the words of the legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. The letters R and I are repunched in AMERICA.

Die Breaks Reverse. A crack begins at the rim above the first A in AMERICA. This crack touches the tops of the remaining letters of that word and joins the rim again to the right of the final A.

Rarity 7 This variety was discovered by Richard Picker in 1954.



Equivalents G-3, E-59

Obverse 1

Reverse B The point of the highest leaf of the wreath is just past the final S in STATES. This reverse is rotated on some specimens.

Die Breaks Obverse. A crack develops which connects the stars to the right of the bust of Liberty to the zero of the date. This crack passes through the 9 of the date. Another crack begins in the field between the border and the lower left



star. This crack connects with the second star and continues through the next four stars.

Reverse. Usually seen with a faint crack connecting the tops of the letters ED STATES and reaching the border over O of OF.

Rarity 4 This coin is very scarce in a condition higher than Very Fine. In the lower grades of condition, it can usually be found unattributed. The striking of this coin is often very weak, particularly on the obverse.

VARIETY #3



Equivalents G-4, E-60

Obverse 2 The curl of the bust of Liberty is directly over the zero of the date.

Reverse B Always seen with the crack mentioned in Variety #2. This reverse is also rotated on some specimens.

Die Breaks Obverse. The lower two stars on the left are sometimes connected by a thin crack.



Reverse. In addition to the crack mentioned in Variety #2, the rim crumbles from E in UNITED to the first S in STATES, and from O of OF to the first A in AMERICA. This coin has been reported to have clash marks on some specimens.

Rarity 2 Tied with Variety #6 for the second most common variety of this date, it can usually be found in all conditions except red Uncirculated.

VARIETY #4



Equivalents G-1, E-56

Obverse 3 The zero of the date is recut so that there appears to be a circle within the zero. There is a die flaw from the throat, which goes across the bust at an upward 45° angle and terminates in the hair to the right of the ribbon. This flaw is sometimes referred to as a die break.

Reverse C The point of the highest leaf of the

wreath is just to the left of O of OF. The point of the branch which forms the right end of the wreath is missing.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 Scarce in Very Fine or higher condition. In the lower grades of condition, this coin is almost common. This variety is listed in popular coin catalogues and its rarity is often exaggerated.

VARIETY #5



(Close up of Date)



Equivalents G-5, E-61

Obverse 4 The "Overdate". The 9 has definitely been cut over another figure. Traces of the other figure can be seen on the left side between the loop and the tail; also to the right of the lower part of the 9. Referred to in popular coin catalogues as the "9 over 6".

Reverse D The highest point of the leaf of the wreath is just to the right of the final S of STATES, which is similar to reverse B. On this reverse, OF is closer to STATES than on reverse

B. It is usually necessary to compare these reverses to tell them apart.

Die Breaks Obverse. An irregular crack begins at the left border and connects with the fourth, fifth and sixth stars and the border between the sixth and seventh star. One specimen is known with two large border breaks. These are opposite the point of the bust of Liberty and below the zero of the date.

Rarity 1 The most common of the date, and available in all conditions except red Uncirculated.

**Equivalents** G-2, E-57

Obverse 5 The 809 of the date follow the border so that the zero appears to be low.

Reverse E The highest point of the leaf of the wreath is about halfway between the final S of STATES and O of OF. The reverse is rotated on some specimens.

Die Breaks Obverse. The rim crumbles from about 12:30 o'clock to about 2:30 o'clock.

Rarity 2 Tied with Variety #3 as the second most common variety of this date. The striking of this coin is usually very poor on the reverse so that the letters of the legend are weak, even on Uncirculated specimens. This coin is usually available in all conditions except red Uncirculated.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

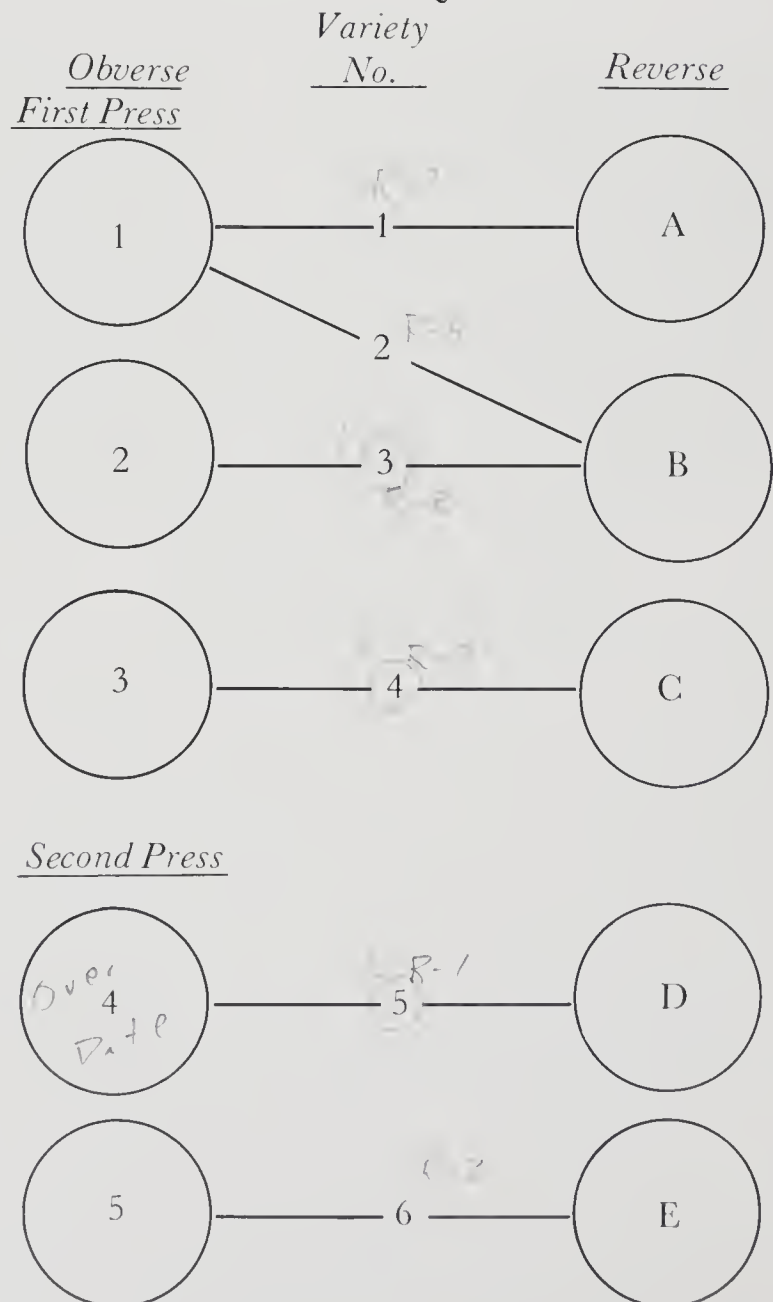
Examine reverse and classify:

- A. Point of highest leaf to the left of O of OF is #4.
- B. Point of highest leaf almost midway between S and O is #6.
- C. Point of highest leaf is not beyond final S of STATES is #1.
- D. Point of highest leaf is just beyond final S of STATES.

Examine obverse:

- a. Curl of bust is over zero is #3.
- b. Curl of bust is over space between zero and 9.
 - (a) Zero and 9 are close is #2.
 - (b) Zero and 9 are distant is #5.

1809
EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported by the Mint for the calendar year is 1,154,572 which is the largest coinage in any one year for the Half Cent. As mentioned in the chapter on 1808, the Mint had approximately 1,500,000 uncoined planchets on hand at the beginning of the year. The coinage of Large Cents was only 222,867 so it is apparent that the Mint accomplished two objectives in this year. One was to keep the coining presses operating, and, second, the majority of uncoined Half Cent planchets were struck. I believe however that there was little or no demand for the "Little Half Sisters" so that the Mint just ended up storing the coins, which were disposed of over the next fifteen years. I also believe that many 1809's were melted for copper to alloy gold and silver during this period.

While the 1809 is a common coin, it is not as common as the coinage would indicate. Again the question arises as to whether the coinage reported was dated 1809. Another question is the Emission Sequence; this year is a guess on my part when it comes to Varieties #4, #5, and #6.

1810

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-62

Obverse 1 The only obverse known with this date.

Reverse A The only reverse known used with obverse 1. This die resembles reverse C of 1809 in that stem end is missing.

Die Breaks Obverse. On most specimens a crack runs from the front of the hair, over the

ribbon, to the first three stars on the left. Another crack runs from a lump on the jaw to the hair on the right. Gilbert notes a rim defect from the second star on the left to the first 1 on the date. I have never seen this.

Reverse. Gilbert lists a big break from T in UNITED to the last S in STATES.

Rarity 3 Generally available in all conditions except Uncirculated.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports a coinage of 215,000. Specimens are occasionally seen with the reverse rotated 45° to the right. The striking of the obverse is usually weak on the right side. This results in the six stars being flat.

1811

VARIETY #1



(Two star
obverse break)

Equivalents G-2, E-64

Obverse 1 The wide date. The 1 and 8 of the date are wide only when compared to obverse 2. The E in LIBERTY is large and punched over a smaller E.

Reverse A The only reverse used in this year. A berry of the wreath is under the center of the first A in AMERICA.

Die Breaks Obverse. This die chips on its left border starting with the two lower stars and en-

larges to include the two next stars. Gilbert lists this break as quite rare. I have seen a few examples of it including one with the break only over the first two stars.

Reverse. None known, but the letters TED of UNITED and STA of STATES are weak on specimens with the obverse break.

Rarity 4 The scarcest of the two varieties of this date, and seldom available in condition higher than Fine.

VARIETY #2



Equivalents G-1, E-63

Obverse 2 The 1 and 8 of the date are close when compared to obverse 1. The E in LIBERTY is normal sized and is punched over another E. This die has clash marks in the field at the lower right of the bust. The last two features are visible only on specimens in Very Fine or higher condition.

Reverse A The same as on Variety #1, but now warped which results in the upper left section

being weak. On worn specimens the letters ED in UNITED and the word STATES are seldom seen.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 Slightly more plentiful than Variety #1. Most 1811's, if not worn, are corroded. I believe this to be due to the fact that the planchets used were the last of the Boulton shipments which had been received in 1803, 1804 and 1807.

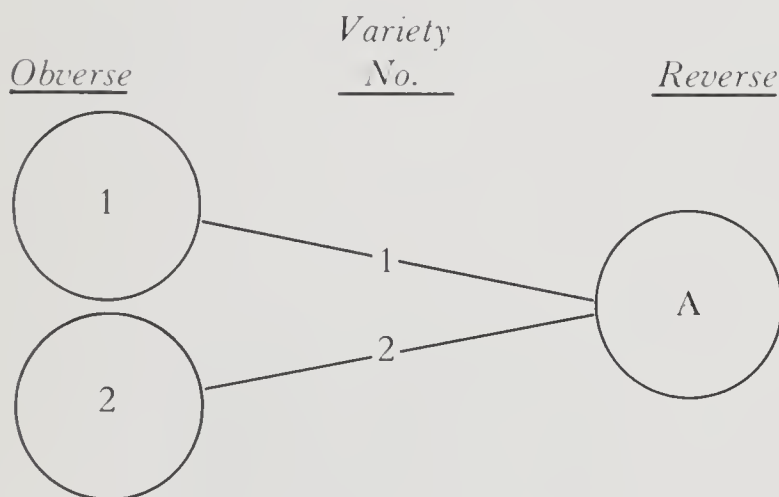
KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

- A. Wide 18 of date and large E in LIBERTY is #1.
 B. Close 18 of date and regular size E in LIBERTY is #2.

1811

EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports a coinage of 63,140 which were delivered to the Treasurer of the Mint on July 9th.

This is the last coinage of Half Cents until 1825. In past writings this hiatus has been explained as being caused by the fact the banks would not accept deliveries of them due to their lack of legal tender status. It is a matter of record that the Director of the Mint, Robert L. Patterson, stopped coinage in 1811. It has also been stated that the coin was unpopular. I believe that all these reasons have merit but the most obvious one is that the Mint finally ran out of planchets. I also believe that the Mint had an enormous number of Half Cents on hand which were to be issued when and if the demand arose. It is also known that in 1811 some Half Cents were melted for use as copper by the Mint. This has been interpreted as meaning that many of the 1811 dated coins were melted. I do not agree that only 1811's were melted. I think that other dates were included in the melt.

In a recent advertisement by a coin dealer, there was listed an 1811 over 10. I have not seen this coin nor heard of another. Until further information is received, I will not list it as a variety.

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Identical to 1809.

DIE PREPARATION The hubs previously used in 1811 were also used to prepare the dies. The hubs do not appear to have deteriorated to any extent during the fourteen years interval. The only defect seen is the letter L in LIBERTY, which lacks the thin portion of its horizontal line. The date numerals appear to be made from the same punches used on Half Eagle dies.

The use of hubs of the old design has been conjectured in the past to be the result of a hasty decision brought about by an unexpected demand for the Half Cent. I do not agree with this conjecture. I base my disagreement on a letter from Boulton in England to the Mint contained in The National Archives. This letter is dated September 22, 1824 and refers to an inquiry from the Mint, dated August 10, 1824, concerning Half Cent planchets. It is obvious from this letter that the Mint contemplated coinage a full year before coin deliveries were made in the last quarter of 1825. Based on this letter, I will make a few surmises of my own.

After coinage ceased in 1811, I believe there was a large supply of coined Half Cents on hand at the Mint. The demand for them was probably slight except possibly in the period of late 1814 to

mid 1816 when no Cents were coined. I also believe that the Director of the Mint, Robert L. Patterson, had a very low regard for the Half Cent and ignored it. It should be noted that the letter from the Mint to Boulton was dated after Patterson's retirement and death, both which occurred in July 1824. Apparently, upon Patterson's departure from the Mint, the new Director, Dr. Samuel Moore, decided that Half Cents should be coined. As the hubs used to prepare dies fourteen years previously were in good condition, it was probably decided not to redesign the Half Cent, the expense of preparing new hubs being considered unnecessary.

PLANCHETS All Half Cents coined in the period 1825 through 1835 were evidently struck on prepared planchets. Boulton's letter of September 22, 1824 proposed a price for 10 tons of prepared planchets with three months allowed for delivery to Liverpool. Ten tons of planchets weighing 84 grains each would be 1,866,667 planchets. It is not known if Boulton received a contract and, if he did, the amount is not known to me. Due to the War of 1812, the Mint had contracted in 1815 with Crocker Bros. of Taunton, Massachusetts for Cent planchets. It is not known whether Crocker Bros. supplied the Half Cent planchets used in the period 1825 to 1835. The total coinage for this period is 2,205,200.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-2, E-67

Obverse 1 The date is punched so that the curl on the bust of Liberty is above the 5.

Reverse A The only known reverse die used in 1825. On this striking the reverse sometimes is rotated 225° to the left.

Die Breaks Obverse. A thin vertical crack starts at 12 o'clock at the rim and runs through the field, the hair, the E of LIBERTY and terminates just prior to entering the field above the

date. This break is difficult to see on a worn specimen.

Rarity 4 Decidedly difficult to obtain in conditions higher than Very Fine.

This variety has a peculiarity in its striking. On all specimens viewed, a small lump is seen on the edge at the position of the lower right star or the preceding star. The reason for this lump is not known but I assume it to be a defect in the collar of the coining press.



Equivalents G-1, E-66

Obverse 2 The curl of the bust of Liberty is over the space between the 2 and 5. The second lowest star on the right is repunched. This is seen below the two right points of this star.

Reverse A The same die as used on Variety #1. On this die all letters of HALF CENT are recut except C.

Die Breaks Obverse. Gilbert lists two cracks. The first runs from the left border through the hair to the right border. The second crack is from the left border to the point of the second star on the left. I have not seen either.

Rarity 1 The most common variety of this date, which is sometimes touted as being rare due to the low coinage reported by the Mint for the calendar year.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

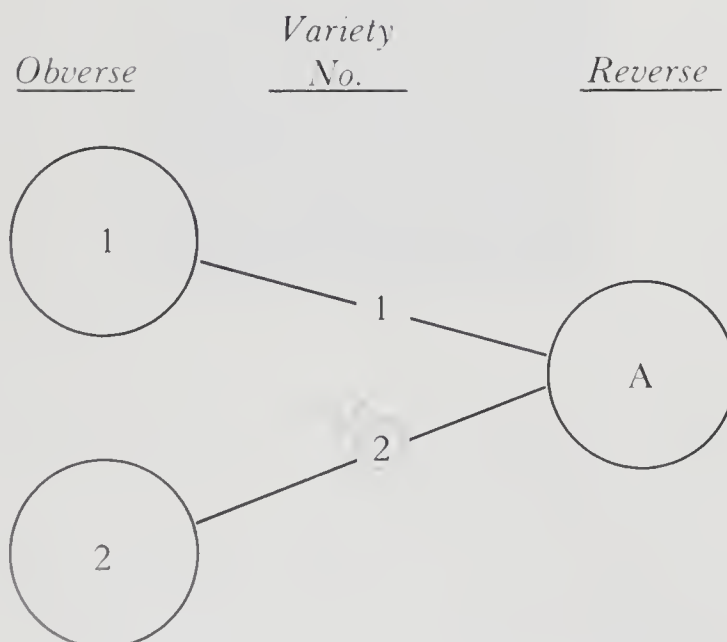
Examine obverse and classify.

A. Curl of bust over 5 is #1.

B. Curl of bust over space between 2 and 5 is #2.

1825

EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage is reported as 63,000 by the Mint. I believe many 1825's were included in the 1826 total of 234,000. It has been my experience that the 1825 and 1826 are of equal availability; therefore, I presume the dated 1825's coined amounted to approximately 148,000.

1826

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Identical to 1825. This basic design continues through 1835; therefore, there will be no further comment until 1849.

DIE PREPARATION The 1809 hubs are used for these dies; however, once the dies had received the impression of the hub, they were re-touched. In this year and in 1828, the obverse die

had the profile of the bust of Liberty changed. The nose was enlarged. The chin was extended slightly so as to have less of a receding effect as seen on prior uses of the hub. The L in LIBERTY lacks the thin portion of its horizontal line. The reverse had the letters HALF CENT repunched so that these letters appear to have been double cut.

There will be no further comment until 1829.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-68

Obverse 1 The differences between the two obverse dies of this date are minute. Positive identification can be accomplished only on specimens in Very Fine or higher condition. On obverse 1 there are a series of crisscross lines to the right of the 6. On obverse 2 these lines are absent; however, on many specimens of obverse 1, these lines are faint even on higher condition coins. The reason for these marks can only be guessed as the removal of an extra numeral or star from the die.

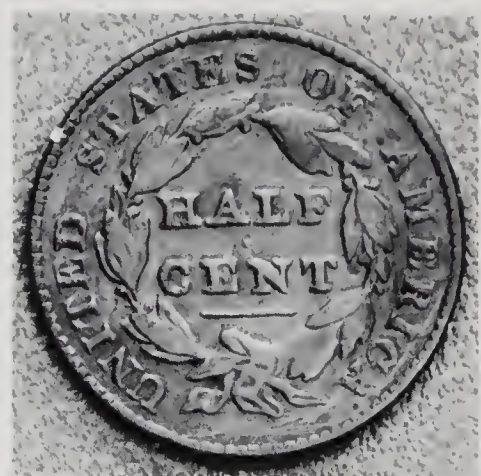
Reverse A The point of the high leaf of the wreath is about one-third of the way beyond the

final S of STATES toward the O of OF. The punching of the legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA is not uniform and indicates that whoever did the work was rather inexperienced.

Die Breaks Obverse. A crack runs from the point of the bust through the first star to the border, and branches through the second, third and fourth stars. There are other minor cracks which develop.

Reverse. A small crack from the stem end to the top of the U of UNITED is seen on most coins.

Rarity 1 Usually obtainable in all conditions except red Uncirculated.



(Two star obverse break)
(Specimen from the collection of Ray Munde)

Equivalents G-2, E-69

Obverse 2 As noted for obverse 1, the absence of the crisscross lines is a determining feature of this die. On some specimens a small spur can be seen at the right side of the lower part of the 6 of the date.

Reverse B The point of the high leaf of the wreath is below the final S of STATES. On some specimens the reverse is rotated a full 180°. This

die was first used with an 1828 obverse.

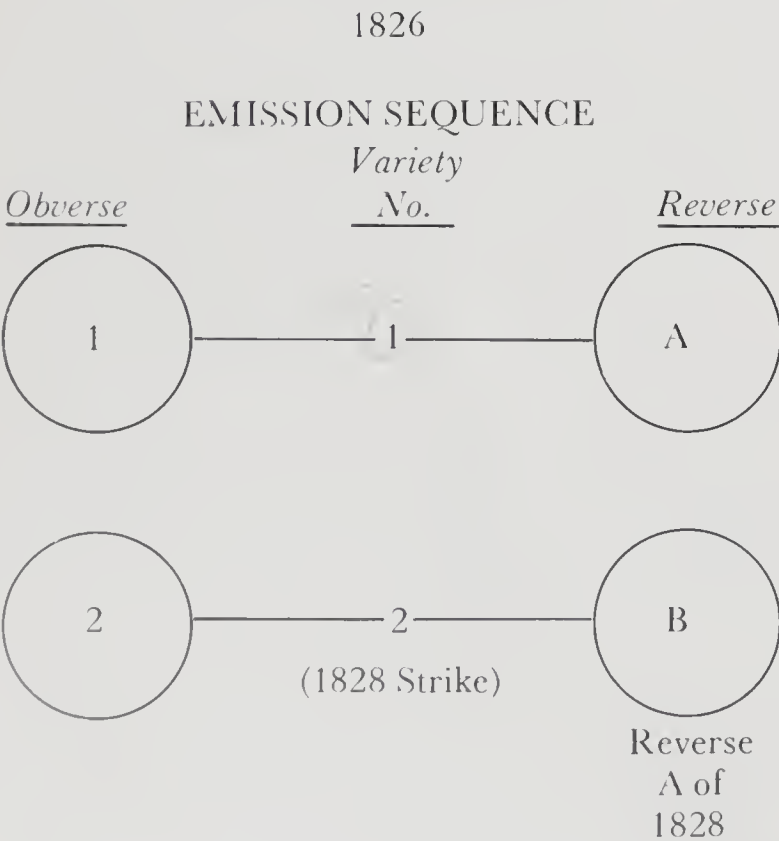
Die Breaks Obverse. The rim chips away at the fourth and fifth stars on the left. This produces a large massive break which includes the above mentioned stars. This break is extremely rare.

Reverse. Always seen with thorn-like projections on the left side of the wreath.

Rarity 3 Very difficult to obtain in condition higher than Very Fine.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

- Examine reverse and classify:
A. Point of high leaf between S and O is #1.
B. Point of high leaf below S is #2.



GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports a coinage of 234,000, which apparently includes many 1825's and does not include Variety #2. Gilbert noted in his book that the reverse of Variety #2 was first used with an 1828 obverse die and could not have been coined in 1826. Apparently what happened is that the Mint prepared two obverse dies dated 1826 in that year and only used one. The unused die was placed in use in 1828 when there was a need for an obverse die.

1828

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-2, E-71

Obverse 1 This is the only 1828 obverse die without an easily distinguishing feature. On some specimens the right side of the second lowest star on the left has small projections. There are six stars on the right side to distinguish it from another 1828 obverse, and the date is evenly spaced to distinguish it from the other 1828 obverse.



Reverse A This is reverse B of 1826 in its earlier state. The thorn-like projections on the left side of the wreath increase in size with this use of the die.

Die Breaks Reverse. In addition to the thorn-like projections on the wreath, some Extremely Fine or higher specimens have a thin line break connecting A of HALF with E of CENT.

Rarity 3 Scarcest of the 1828 dated specimens. Uncirculated examples are seldom seen.

VARIETY #2



Equivalents G-3, E-72

Obverse 2 The twelve star variety. There are only five stars on the right side. The reason for the omission of the star can only be guessed as an error on the part of the die sinker.

Reverse B There is a berry below the left stand of M in AMERICA. On the other 1828 reverses, this berry is directly below the right stand of A in AMERICA.

Die Breaks None known.



Rarity 2 This coin has been known to collectors for 100 years or more and the most has been made of the missing star. In lower grades of condition there is no difficulty in locating specimens. The author has seen as many as ten in a local dealer's stock. In Uncirculated condition, this coin is of about equal scarcity with Variety #1, in that they are seldom seen. The striking of Variety #2 is usually weak at the lower left stars. I have never seen a specimen which had all twelve stars showing their lines.



Equivalents G-1, E-70

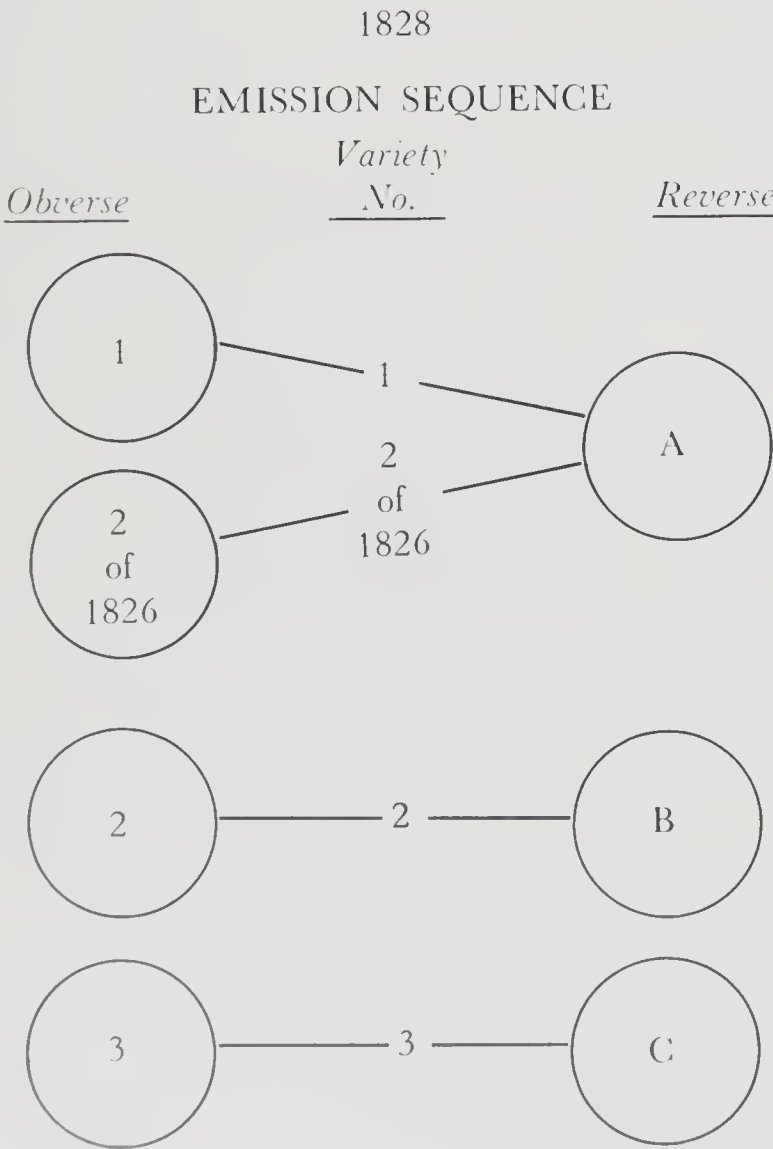
Obverse 3 Thirteen stars as on obverse 1, but the date is uneven. The first 8 is high when compared to the 2 which is low compared to both 8's. The first 8 and the 2 are widely separated compared to the other date numerals.

Reverse C The U in UNITED appears to have been started too low, so there is a projection from the left side of that letter. This is the only 1828 reverse with this feature.

Die Breaks Reverse. The leaf above H in HALF develops a thorn-like projection which oc-

asionally results in this die being erroneously classified as Reverse A.

Rarity 1 Common in all conditions including red Uncirculated. The reason for the plentifulness of this variety in Uncirculated condition has been the "Collins Hoard". This accumulation was found in Alexandria, Virginia by an early Washington, D.C. collector and dealer named Benjamin H. Collins. He is supposed to have purchased over 1,000 specimens from an old Negro woman during the 1890's.



- KEYS TO VARIETIES
- Examine obverse and classify:
- A. Twelve stars is #2.
 - B. Thirteen stars. Examine reverse.
 - a. Point of high leaf under S is #1.
 - b. Point of high leaf past S is #3.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported by the Mint is 606,000 for the year. This undoubtedly includes Variety #2 of 1826.

1829

DIE PREPARATION The retouching of the obverse die after receiving the hub impression is more evident. The jaw is fuller, the lips are larger, and the chin juts. The receding effect is entirely eliminated. The missing horizontal line of L in LIBERTY has been hand cut in the die.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-73

Obverse 1 The only known 1829 dated obverse. The numerals of the date are smaller than 1828, and the 2 is less ornate. The striking of this die often causes the stars to appear elongated to the border.

Reverse A Very similar to reverse C of 1828. The point of the high leaf is just beyond the final S of STATES. This is the only known reverse used in 1829.

Die Breaks Reverse. There is a large spike shaped defect from the wreath which passes

through the C of CENT, the H of HALF, and terminates in the field above the H. This defect is very prominent on some specimens while on others it cannot be seen.

On some specimens slight ridges can be seen connecting the tops of the letters OF and ME of AMERICA. It is unknown whether the ridges are die defects which disappear with use, or die cracks.

Rarity 1 Common in all conditions except red Uncirculated.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported by the Mint is 487,000. This number probably was in excess of the demand for the Half Cent in 1829, and explains why there was no coinage in 1830.

1831

DIE PREPARATION The retouching of the obverse die results in a chin which juts beyond the lips; however, the downward slant of the chin produces a slight receding effect. The horizontal line of L in LIBERTY is hand cut in the die. The date is small when compared to 1829. The rim is squared, which appears to be the result of a new type collar in the coining press.

VARIETY #1



(Specimen from the collection of Ray Munde)



Equivalents G-1, E-74

Obverse 1 The only known 1831 dated obverse die, numerals of date are very small.

Reverse A The point of the high leaf of the wreath is below the final S of STATES. Immediately below the highest group of leaves there is a projection of the lower left side of a letter. The

reason for this is unknown but it appears that an impression was made in the die prior to the striking of the hub.

Die Breaks None known

Rarity 7 These are the business strikes and should not be confused with the proofs from the same dies which are included in Chapter 34.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported by the Mint is 2,200 which is questionable in view of the few specimens known. The rarity of this date has been known for over 100 years, and it is doubtful that many additional specimens will be discovered unless there is an unknown accumulation. There are a number of altered date specimens known. These have been made from 1834 coins and are easily detected as the size of that date is much larger and the stars are smaller.

For many years coin catalogues had the erroneous notation "Proof only" for this date, and some continue to perpetuate this error. Walter Breen was the first person to my knowledge to point out that both business strikes and proofs were struck from these dies.

1832

DIE PREPARATION The retouching of the obverse die results in a chin which juts as far out as the lips. However, the downward slant of the chin is more pronounced than in 1831 and produces a greater receding effect. The horizontal line of the L in LIBERTY is handcut in the die. The stars are small and the date is also small as in 1831. The rim is squared and continues for the remainder of the Half Cent series.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-2, E-78

Obverse 1 The only known 1832 dated obverse die.

Reverse A The same reverse die used in 1831. On some specimens of this date, there is a flaw



running from the top of the A in STATES leftward to the border.

Die Breaks None known. The reverse die flaw from A in STATES is sometimes referred to as a break.

Rarity 3 Scarcest of the 1832's.

VARIETY #2



Equivalents G-1, E-77

Obverse 1

Reverse B The point of the high leaf of wreath is below E of STATES. The spacing of the legend is very uneven. The letters N in UNITED, E in STATES and the A's of AMERICA are all recut.

Die Breaks Reverse. On some specimens a



crack starts at the border, left of E in STATES, and runs to the wreath after touching the left foot of the E.

Rarity 1 The most frequently encountered 1832 variety. Proofs were struck from these dies; as a result, some early business strikes will exhibit proof-like surfaces in the fields.



Equivalents G-3, E-79

Obverse 1

Reverse C The point of the high leaf of the wreath is below the final S of STATES on this die as well as on reverse A, so it is necessary to notice the D in UNITED, the final S in STATES, and the first A in AMERICA. All three of these letters

have been recut. The outer curve of the D is the most prominent. The legend begins and ends distant from the ribbon and stem of the wreath when compared to reverse A.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 1 Only slightly less common than Variety #2.

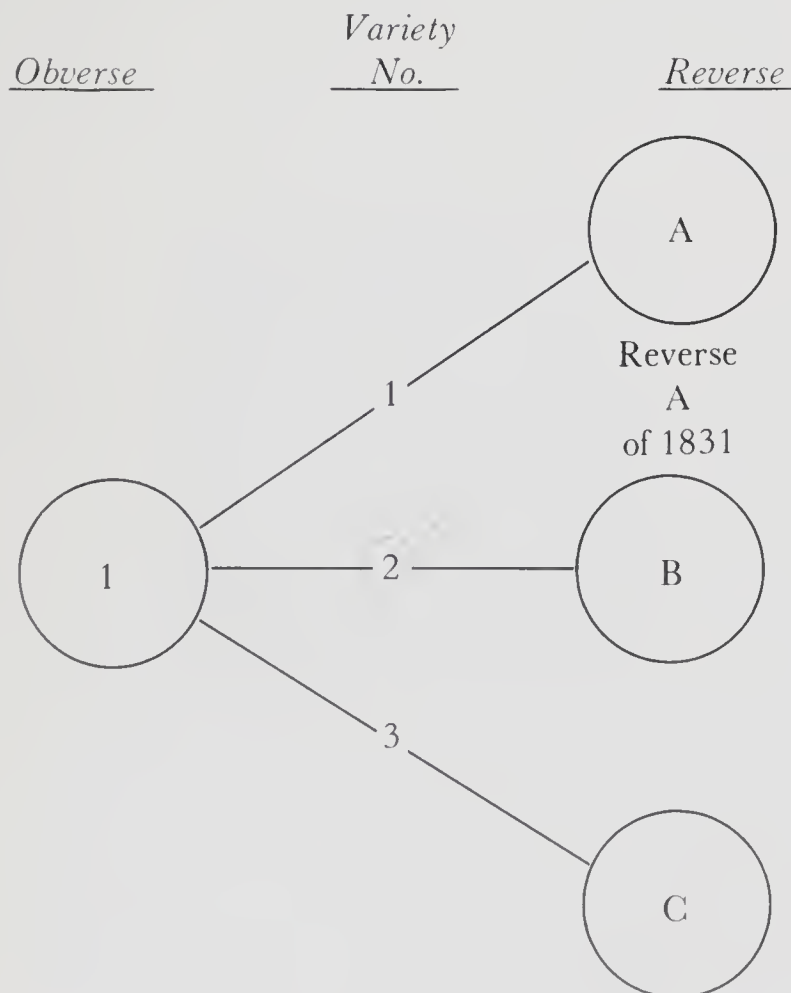
KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine reverse and classify:

- A. Point of the high leaf of wreath below S of STATES. D of UNITED not recut is #1.
- B. Point of the high leaf of wreath below E of STATES is #2.
- C. D of UNITED recut is #3.

1832

EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports no Half Cents delivered by the Chief Coiner in the calendar year 1832; however, records indicate that as of June 1833, 154,000 Half Cents had been coined in 1832 and 1833 to date. It is impossible to identify the number of 1832 dated specimens, but it is reasonable to assume that the majority of the 154,000 were dated 1832.

This confusion probably arises due to the fact that the Mint moved into its new building, located at Juniper and Chestnut Streets, in January 1833. It is a matter of record that the old machinery from the first Mint was moved into this new structure. Later, in 1835, the old machinery, which had been replaced, was moved back to the old Mint and sold off in 1835. I am of the opinion that the Mint looked upon the coinage of Half Cents as a task which was not deserving of their best efforts nor record keeping.

1833

DIE PREPARATION The retouching of the die results in Liberty having an even larger nose, lips, and a huge chin, (when compared to 1809), which juts beyond the lips. The chin line is straight without any receding effect. The horizontal line of L in LIBERTY is hand cut.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-80

Obverse 1 The only known 1833 dated obverse die. The date numerals are larger than in 1832.

Reverse A The only known 1833 reverse. The point of the high leaf of the wreath is below the left portion of the final S of STATES. This die almost always shows clash marks of the obverse die. Liberty's profile may be seen to the left of HALF CENT.

Die Breaks Obverse. A thin line crack begins in the field above Liberty's hair and connects with all the stars on the left side, except the lower one.

Rarity 1 Very common. Most specimens are in Fine or higher condition.

GENERAL COMMENTS

This is another year when the Mint report is considered to be in error. The generally accepted amount of coinage is 120,000.

1834

DIE PREPARATION Same as in 1833.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-81

Obverse 1 The only known 1834 dated obverse die. Clash marks are often seen. At some time during the life of the die, the clash marks were removed by polishing the fields of the die, which results on proof-like surfaces on some specimens.

Reverse A This is the same reverse used in 1833. Clash marks are often seen and the same comment concerning the polishing of the die applies to this reverse.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 1 Another common Half Cent, and seldom seen in very worn condition.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Amount coined is unknown, but the generally accepted amount is 141,000.

1835

DIE PREPARATION This is the last use of the 1809 hubs except for the “made to order” date of 1836. The profile of Liberty is the same as in 1833 and 1834; however, the horizontal line of the

L in LIBERTY was not hand cut. This letter is now separated into two pieces in a manner similar to 1825, 1826 and 1828.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-2, E-83

Obverse 1 The only dated 1835 obverse. The date is much smaller than in 1833 and 1834. This die is usually seen with clash marks of the wreath below the bust of Liberty.

Reverse A This is the same reverse used in 1833 and 1834, and again clash marks are often seen. Some specimens exhibit multiple clash marks.



Die Breaks Reverse. Reported by Gilbert to have a crack from the second T to near E in STATES and another crack from the border to the wreath through the first S of STATES. I have not seen either of these.

Rarity 1 Common in all conditions higher than Good, including red Uncirculated.

VARIETY #2



Equivalents G-1, E-82

Obverse 1

Reverse B This reverse differs slightly from reverse A. The main feature is the distance between the letters ST of STATES. On reverse B, these letters are close when compared to reverse A.

Die Breaks Reverse. An arc-like crack runs from the left border above D in UNITED through the wreath, the letters H and A of HALF, the wreath again, the right side of O of OF to the border. Another crack runs from the border



through R in AMERICA to the wreath. Still another thin crack starts at the top of E in AMERICA and runs through the remaining letters and terminates at the border below the left ribbon of the wreath. There are clash marks which can be mistaken for further breaks, but these marks are an outline of the obverse bust of Liberty and can usually be traced.

Rarity 1 Common in all conditions higher than Good. This coin and the preceding variety were found in an accumulation of approximately 1,000 Uncirculated specimens about fifty years ago.

KEYS TO VARIETIES

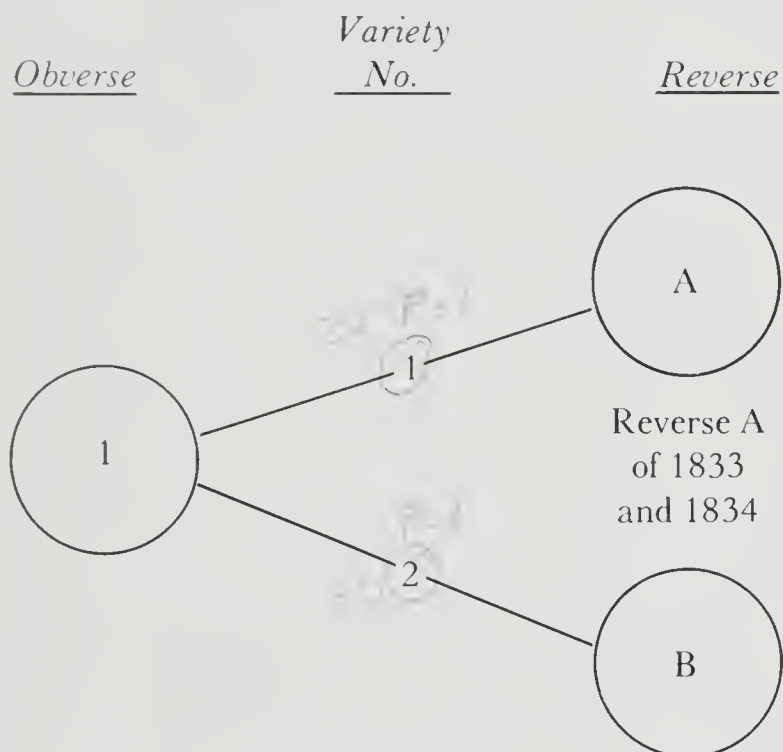
Examine reverse and classify:

A. If S and T of STATES are distant it is #1.

B. If S and T of STATES are close it is #2.

1835

EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

A coinage of 398,000 which was reported for the year 1836, is considered to be correct for this date. At the conclusion of the 1835 dated coinage, the Mint had a surplus on hand which was to last for thirteen years. Records in The National Archives indicate the following inventories were on hand:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number</u>
January 29, 1837	452,500
September 30, 1839	406,050
December 31, 1840	402,200
September 22, 1841	371,710
December 31, 1842	330,400
September 30, 1843	267,100
December 31, 1844	174,952
December 31, 1845	149,594
June 30, 1846	135,560
September 30, 1847	102,956
March 31, 1848	95,544
June 30, 1848	88,848
September 30, 1848	70,258
June 30, 1849	30,900
September 29, 1849	24,778
December 31, 1849	32,020

It is obvious from the above data that the 1849 coinage was the first struck for general circulation after 1835. The Half Cent collector need not, in my opinion, concern himself with the proof only dates. These, together with their restrikes, should be left to proof and restrike collectors, together with the questions as to just when and by whom they were coined.

1849

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Obverse. The “Braided Hair” design, which was first used on the Large Cent in 1843. There are Half Cents, in proof condition, with this design bearing dates as early as 1840.

Reverse. The same design and style as the Large Cent starting in 1843, consisting of the legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, surrounding a continuous wreath and the words HALF CENT within the wreath.

DIE PREPARATION Obverse. A hub was used for the entire die except for the date, which was separately punched.

Reverse. Entire die was prepared by the use of a hub.

Some specimens of this design will show double outlines of the obverse and or reverse die. It is believed that this is caused by vibrations of the die or dies at the moment of striking.

PLANCHETS Records in The National Archives disclose that Crocker & Brothers of Taunton, Massachusetts supplied prepared planchets starting in November 1849. These planchets are smaller and thicker than in 1835 but the weight, 84 grains, is the same.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-3, E-116

Obverse The date is very large. The 1 overlaps the point of the bust. The 8 and the 4 touch the curl above these figures. The 9 does not touch any device.

Reverse There are no distinguishing features to separate the dies if more than one was used. This is due to the fact that the dies were struck from a hub which had the complete design.

Rarity 2 The greater majority of these coins are in at least Very Good condition. Red Uncirculated specimens, not recolored, are extremely rare. Many of this date are weakly struck. Some specimens are known with the reverse rotated 90°.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 39,864, all of which were struck and delivered in November and December of 1849.

1850

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Same as 1849.

DIE PREPARATION Same as 1849.

PLANCHETS Same as 1849.

The above three headings are the same for general circulation coins struck during the 1850's, so there will be no further comment.

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-117 & 118

Obverse The numerals of the date are small when compared to 1849.

Reverse The same comment as on 1849. In the Empire Guide, two separate reverse dies are listed. I believe these to be the same die. The differences are miniscule and appear to me to be the result of die wear.

Rarity 2 This coin is very scarce in original red Uncirculated. Many coins are weakly struck.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the year, 39,812.

1851

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-119

Obverse The date is small and traces of a second 1 can be seen to the right of the final 1 of the date.

Reverse No distinguishing feature on this hub-stamped die, which may have been used in a prior year or years.

Rarity 1 The most common of the "Braided Hair" Half Cents. Original red Uncirculated specimens are known.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the year, 147,672, which appears to have been enough for the demand until 1853.

1851

TABLE 18

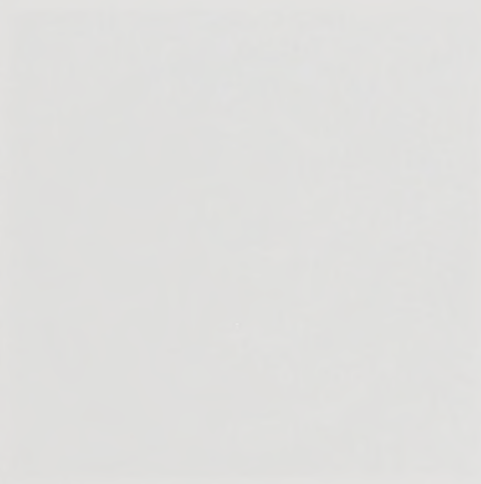


TABLE 18

TABLE 18

TABLE 18

1853

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-124

Obverse Large numerals in date similar to 1849.

Reverse The same hub was used to prepare the die or dies used this year.

Rarity 1 Another coin which is very rare in original red Uncirculated condition. The quality of most strikes is rather poor.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 129,694.

1854

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-125 & 126

Obverse A small date with a slanting 5. The hub which was used for the "Braided Hair" Half Cent dies had a small defect in the hair to the lower right of the ear which, on this die, is repaired with the use of the graver. The hub defect can be seen on all the other "Braided Hair" Half Cents as it is not repaired.

Reverse On some examples of this date, the I in UNITED has a lump near its top. The lump is very minute and requires at least a 10-power glass to be seen. It is not known whether the pit which causes the lump was on the same die which struck perfect specimens, or whether it is an entirely new die.

Rarity 1 A common coin in condition of Fine and higher. Numerous red Uncirculated specimens are known. This coin is usually well struck with the obverse stars and both obverse and reverse border rims well defined.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 55,358.

1855

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-127

Obverse A small date with both 5's slanting.

Reverse The usual hub prepared die.

Rarity 1 Another common coin and like the 1854, is usually in at least Fine condition and available in red Uncirculated. The striking of most specimens is not as well defined as on the 1854.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 56,500.

1856

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-128 & 129

Obverse A small date with an upright 5

Reverse The usual hub prepared die. On some reverses the lump on I in UNITED may be seen as described in 1854. In the Empire Guide the lump is considered to be a separate variety. I do not agree as it is entirely possible that the 1854's with the lump on the reverse could have been struck in 1856 after the die was injured. It should also be noted that the copper-nickel trial pieces struck in this year (mentioned in Chapter 34) are dated both 1854 and 1856.

Rarity 1 Seldom seen in lower than Fine condition. Red Uncirculated specimens are of the same availability as 1854 and 1855.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported as 40,430.

1857

VARIETY #1



Equivalents G-1, E-131

Obverse A large date when compared to 1854-1856, but smaller than 1849 and 1853.

Reverse The usual hub prepared die.

Rarity 2 Very few specimens of this date are found in worn condition. The greater majority which were released for circulation must have been saved due to the Half Cent's discontinuance. Mint Director Snowden reported that many of this date were melted and not released for circulation. Numerous red Uncirculated specimens are known.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 35,180.

“Other Half Cents”

When I first started to collect Half Cents by dates, I noticed that coin catalogues had many dates with the notations, “Proofs Only” or “Restrike”. The prices of these were quite high but, as most new collectors do, I was following the catalogue.

Shortly thereafter I bid on an 1843 which was described in an auction catalogue as being in Good condition. I received the coin for about 30 per cent of my bid. Far from being in Good condition, it seemed to me it was in Very Fine condition. This just didn't make sense but, as I sat at my desk contemplating the problem. I accidentally dropped the coin. I heard a dull thud. I then examined the coin's edge and it turned out to be an electrotype. Needless to say, I returned it. This illustrates one of the problems of collecting “Other Half Cents”.

In the case of Half Cents, the making of pieces of metal with the words “Half Cent” for collectors has been quite prevalent. The U. S. Mint coined not only proofs of regular dies for collectors, but proofs in years for which there was no regular coinage. Additionally it is believed that restrikes of various dates were coined at the Mint.

In this Chapter, I shall put the “Other Half Cents” in what I consider to be a declining order of their desirability to collectors.

First are the proofs of regular coinage dies. These were prepared as polished up examples of the Mint's coinage. They were issued singly or in Proof sets. All specimens are very rare.

The following have been reported:

- 1 - 1825 Variety #2
- 2 - 1826 Variety #1
- 3 - 1829
- 4 - 1831
- 5 - 1832 Variety #1
- 6 - 1832 Variety #2
- 7 - 1833
- 8 - 1834
- 9 - 1835 Variety #2
- 10 - 1849 (Doubtful)
- 11 - 1850
- 12 - 1851
- 13 - 1853 (Doubtful)
- 14 - 1854
- 15 - 1855
- 16 - 1856
- 17 - 1857

The next category is those dates which are known by proof only strikes and are considered to be originals. These were issued singly or were included in proof sets by the Mint. All of these are very rare.

- 1 - 1836
- 2 - 1840
- 3 - 1841
- 4 - 1842
- 5 - 1843
- 6 - 1844
- 7 - 1845
- 8 - 1846
- 9 - 1847
- 10 - 1848
- 11 - 1849 (with small date)
- 12 - 1852

I am including 1840, 1841 and 1842 in this category although I question whether they were struck in the years which they bear. My question is, “Why does the Half Cent show a design which was not used on the Large Cent until 1843?” Dies with the earlier dates could have been easily prepared after 1843.

The third category of “Other Half Cents” is trial pieces. These were struck at the Mint and have 1854 and 1856 dates. The planchets are made of the copper-nickel alloy which was used for the Cents during the period 1857 to 1864. The 1854 trial piece is extremely rare. Fifty 1856 specimens are recorded as being struck to demonstrate the copper-nickel alloy in that year, when Congress was debating the new Small Cent. This piece is considered to be R-5 today (more than 30 specimens known).

The fourth category is Restrikes in proof condition of various dates which are believed to have been struck at the Mint in the 1850's and 1860's. It is not known whether these were official or unofficial issues. There are minute differences in the reverse dies used. Included in this category are such ridiculous items as the 1831 and 1836 obverses muled with the later 1849 style reverse. The following dates are known:

- 1831 1 reverse of the correct style and 1 with the 1849 reverse.
- 1836 1 reverse of the correct style and 1 with the 1849 reverse.

1840	2 reverses
1841	2 reverses
1842	2 reverses
1843	2 reverses
1844	2 reverses
1845	2 reverses
1846	2 reverses
1847	2 reverses
1848	2 reverses
1849	obverse with small date, 2 reverses.
1852	3 reverses
1856	1 reverse
1857	2 reverses

These restrikes are all rare and seldom offered for sale.

The fifth category is the 1811 Restrike. This item was struck outside of the Mint, using the dies of 1811 obverse 2 and 1802 reverse B. Both dies were quite rusty when the Restrikes were made. J. J. Mickley, an early coin collector, supposedly had six specimens struck about 1858. The dies had been acquired after the Mint had sold them for junk. In 1878 the U. S. Government reac-

quired the dies from the Mickley Estate. At the present time the location of five specimens is known. A new collector need not worry about having a Restrike sold to him as an original since the present market price of the Restrike is in excess of a Mint coined 1811.

The sixth category is the 1837 token. This item, which has been included in popular albums and coin catalogues, properly belongs in a collection of Hard Times Tokens. It is known as Low #49. This token is interesting in that it was struck privately, and circulated during the Depression of 1837 at a time when the Mint had over 400,000 unissued Half Cents. Collectors should have no trouble in acquiring this item as it is relatively common.

The seventh and final category is Electrotypes, Casts and Other Facsimilies. These were mentioned in the chapter on 1796, which is the usual date encountered. There are other dates known, such as 1793, 1794, 1831, 1836, 1840-1849 and 1852. Recently the author received a coin list which had "Original" Electrotypes listed for sale. I am still pondering just what an "Original" Electrotypes is.

Table of Equivalents

Persons who have attributed Half Cents by variety in the past will find this table useful as a cross reference.

				<i>Gilbert</i>			
<u>Date</u>	<u>CMM#</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Empire</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>CMM#</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Empire</u>
1793	1	4	4	1804	1	6	37
	2	3	3		2	-	-
	3	1	1		3	-	43
	4	2	2		4	10	41
1794	1a	9	13		5	11	42
	1b	-	13a		6	8	39
	2a	5	9		7	9	40
	2b	-	-		8	7	38
	3	7	11		9	5	36
	4	4	8		10	4	35
	5	8	12		11	1	32
	6	6	10		12	3	34
	7	2	6		13	2	33
	8	3	7	1805	1	1	44
	9	1	5		2	4	47
1795	1	1	14		3	3	46
	2a	3	15		4	2	45
	2b	8	15a	1806	1	1	48
	3	7	19		2	2	50
	4	4	16		3	-	49
	5a	6	18		4	3	51
	5b	6	18	1807	1	1	52
	6a	5	17	1808	1	-	53
	6b	-	17		2	1	54
1796	1	2	21		3	2	55
	2	1	20	1809	1	-	58
1797	1	4	24		2	3	59
	2	3	23		3	4	60
	3a	2	22b		4	1	56
	3b	1	22		5	5	61
	3c	-	22a		6	2	57
1800	1	1	25	1810	1	1	62
1802	1	2	26	1811	1	2	64
	2	1	27		2	1	63
1803	1	2	29	1825	1	2	67
	2	4	31		2	1	66
	3	3	30	1826	1	1	68
	4	1	28		2	2	69
				1828	1	2	71
					2	3	72
					3	1	70

<u>Date</u>	<u>CMM#</u>	<u>Gilbert No.</u>	<u>Empire</u>
1829	1	1	73
1831	1	1	74
1832	1	2	78
	2	1	77
	3	3	79
1833	1	1	80
1834	1	1	81
1835	1	2	83
	2	1	82
1849	1	3	116
1850	1	1	117 & 118
1851	1	1	119
1853	1	1	124
1854	1	1	125 & 126
1855	1	1	127
1856	1	1	128 & 129
1857	1	1	131

Two Gilbert varieties, No. 2 of 1795 and No. 3 of 1808, have no equivalent in my work as I do not consider them to be varieties. My reasons for these omissions are mentioned in the General Comments of each date.

Both Gilbert and Empire assign numbers to some of the “Other Half Cents” (see Chapter 34), which have been omitted from this table.

References and Acknowledgments

The principal reference has been "The United States Half Cents", by Ebenezer Gilbert, 1916.

Other source books have been:

"U.S. Cents and Half Cents, 1793-1857", by Ed. Frossard, 1879.

"The U. S. Mint and Coinage", by Don Taxay, 1966.

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Periodicals referred to are:

"The Numismatist"

"The Numismatic Scrapbook"

"Penny-wise"

"The Coin Collector's Journal"

Price lists and auction catalogues referred to are:

The Alvord Sale by S. H. Chapman on June 9, 1924.

The Brobston Collection by Stacks, 1963.

Various catalogues of Stacks, Lester Merkin, and New Netherlands Coin Co.

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Paul Munson; Claremont, New Hampshire

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The photographs were taken through the courtesy of Julius Reiver of Wilmington, Delaware, who is also a student of American and English copper coinage of the Half Cent era.

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	<i>Newman</i>			<i>105</i>	<i>-</i>
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